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FIVE YEARS' PENAL SERVITUDE

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BY

ONE WHO HAS ENDURED IT

William Hamilton Thomson 23343 a c

NEW EDITION

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LONDON
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PREFATORY NOTE.

THE PUBLISHERS, before offering this work to the public, have satisfied themselves that the following narrative is what it purports to be—the genuine record of five years' penal servitude by one who endured it. It is given to the public in the hope that its statements may secure the attention of the thoughtful, and bring about some of the changes suggested in its pages. Of these a classification of prisoners, and a diminution of the term of imprisonment for first offences, seem most to call for attention.

NEW BURLINGTON STREET:
October 1877.

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FIVE YEARS' PENAL SERVITUDE.

CHAPTER I.

NEWGATE.

PENAL SERVITUDE is a thing many people—most people—hear of and read of a great deal, but about which only a certain number know really anything. Few subjects, perhaps, have been more written upon by persons who are either totally ignorant of the subject they profess to describe, and who draw liberal drafts on their imaginations, as poets do in descanting of Paradise and Hades.

Some gather scraps of information from prison chaplains and warders, and perhaps here and there get hold of an informant who has passed through its ordeal, and who, more or less reluctantly, tells a few actual experiences which the author works up and embellishes with touches of sensation or romance into a readable article or saleable book.

Many a quiet smile have I had over the perusal of convicts' confessions, chaplains' reminiscences, and other similar articles I have met with in magazines, journals, and newspapers. Has anyone, having actually been tried, convicted, and sentenced to penal servitude, after working out the long years of slavery and obtaining his freedom, sat down to give the world an account of his experiences in a plain unvarnished tale? I doubt it; and as some few years ago it was my fate to have to pass through the terrible ordeal of a sentence of five years' penal servitude, I propose to give to the world what I actually suffered, saw, and experienced in two of the convict establishments of this country. I had many peculiar facilities for seeing a great deal of the working of the system of

penal servitude, and being of an observing disposition at all times, I made careful mental notes from time to time of its effect on different characters and classes of men, in its corrective and repressive bearings on the prisoners, and I think my narrative may not be uninteresting to those who take an interest in and are anxious to reform and improve prison discipline, as well as to the general reader.

It matters little to the public what it was that brought me within the grip of my country's laws. Suffice it to say, after over twenty years of commercial life in more than one large English city, I found myself, in the year 186–, drawn into the meshes of a man who was too clever for me and for the law, and who, crossing the seas to a place of safety, left me to meet a charge to which in his absence I had really no defence. I was sentenced to five years' penal servitude, and the following pages will tell how I went through with it.

Passing over the details of my arrest by a detective, my appearance before a magistrate, remands time after time, and final trial at the Old Bailey, I will commence at once with my first acquaintance with prison discipline at Newgate. On first being remanded from the magistrates' court in the City of London, I was conveyed in the hearse-like looking omnibus, well known as the 'Black Maria,' to Newgate. Most of my readers will remember having seen these terrible conveyances going to and from the various police offices and metropolitan prisons. On mounting the steps I was ushered into a passage running up the centre from end to end of the 'bus,' with a number of doors on each side, through one of which I was gently pushed, and found myself shut up in a close box, with a seat, not too well ventilated nor too clean, and out of the gratings of which I vainly endeavoured to catch a glimpse of the world I was leaving. On the seat, much to my surprise, were two large slices of bread, which I afterwards found by my own experience had been the allowance given out to some prisoner who had left the gaol in the morning, and had either been discharged, or had forgotten to eat what in prison slang is called his 'toke' or 'chuck.'

No sooner was the outer door shut and locked, and the vehicle commenced its journey, than I was made aware of the presence of fellow travellers by voices calling to each other with inquiries as to how they had got on before the magistrate, what sentence they

had received, or, as it was curtly asked, 'How much?' I soon found that I was in a box between two parties known to each other and concerned in the same affair, and when they found a stranger was dividing them, both desisted from their own recriminations as to 'rounding' and 'blowing' on each other, to commence a series of rapid inquiries as to who I was and what I was 'up' for, if remanded or committed, what I expected to get, and had I ever been in the 'steel,' a slang name for one of the large metropolitan prisons, as the 'Gate' is for Newgate.

On arrival within the courtyard at the grim old city prison, from whose debtors' door so many have stepped to pass on to the gallows, I was let out and marshalled into a dark stone passage, where I was told to stand in a row with my fellow-passengers.

The Deputy-Governor, in a plain uniform with cap and gold band, attended by two warders, received us, and on the constable, who had acted as the conductor of our sombre carriage, handing to him a number of papers, one for each prisoner, he called out the names, to which each replied. Most of them were 'remands' or committals, and were simply marched off by warders to their respective cells. By 'committals' I mean that they had been committed by the magistrate that day for trial at the next Old Bailey sessions.

My turn came last; I was that day the only new hand. I was told to follow a warder, a young man, who saw in a moment I was 'green,' that this was my first visit within a criminal prison, and was as civil as I could reasonably expect. I was, of course, only now remanded under suspicion. I might be as innocent as the babe in long clothes, or I might be guilty of the most heinous crimes.

My guide ushered me into a stone cellar-like place, where there were several small rooms with baths in them. I was directed to enter one and undress. On my so doing my clothes were taken and one by one carefully examined, my pockets turned out, and all prohibited articles, such as keys, cash, knife, &c., removed. An inventory of these things was taken, and I was told that any of my friends, on calling to see me, might take them away. I was informed that I could either have the prison allowance of food or order in what I wished for, under certain restrictions, from an eating-house on the opposite side of the Old Bailey, and that the money found upon me could either be given to such of my friends

as I wished or applied in payment for such food as I ordered in. At first I had in my meals from outside; but in a few days I found every shilling I possessed would be needed by my family and for my defence, and I determined to accept the full brunt of my position and put up at once with the prison fare.

I was told that I must have a bath, and immediately my eyes turned to the water to see if it was clean; for not long before had appeared those letters in the *Pall Mall Gazette* of the 'Amateur Casual,' whose graphic description of his bath in water like weak mutton broth instantly flashed across my mind. Here, however, all was clean—water, towel, and bath-room; the whole, in fact, being very similar in every way to ordinary second-class baths at the various public establishments in London. Soap, too, was there in plenty, and I have no doubt that with many of the persons they have to receive at Newgate this 'investiture of the bath' is a very requisite institution.

On re-dressing I was desired to precede my 'valet de bain' up a flight of iron stairs into a large lofty hall with a glass roof like a railway station, and on each side of which were galleries, one above the other, forming tiers, with cells along each, the doors of which were all numbered. On each gallery was a warder in uniform. A number was shouted in a loud voice by my attendant, when a warder on the first flight called me to come up the stairs to him. I did so, and was at once ushered into my cell, and in few words told what I had to do in case I wished to speak to a warder, and shown that everything was clean and in its place, and that I was expected to keep it so. I was told that, if I liked to pay another prisoner to clean my cell, I could, by permission of the Governor, have it done for me, but otherwise I should have to do it myself. A printed list of the rules was pointed out to me, and I was advised to study and avoid breaking them.

The door, on being closed, shut to with a horrid discordant clash, and for the first time I completely realised my terrible position, and felt utterly cast down. I knew at once that, unless the man who had got me into the trouble I then was in could be brought to book, it must be quite a miracle that I could escape a conviction. Nothing but some curious quirk and quibble of the law, or the turning up of my Mephistopheles, could save me, and I felt how very little chance there was for me of the latter taking

place. As to the legal chance, I knew that everything that the late Mr. James Lewis could do for me he would do. He had known me, man and boy, for over twenty years, and I shall never forget his surprise when he first visited me at the police court in obedience to my summons for his aid.

After a while I examined my cell and its furniture. A stone or brick arched room some twelve feet by seven; white-washed walls spotlessly clean; a water-closet seat in one corner; a bright copper wash-basin, burnished like gold, fastened to the wall, with a water-tap over it; a small flap-table fast to the wall; a wooden stool; three slate shelves in one corner, on which were a Bible, Prayer and Hymn-book. An iron enamelled plate, a tin mug, wooden spoon and salt-box, and a piece of soap were arranged on the two lower shelves in so precise a manner that each separate article seemed to positively glare at me. On the top shelf was a curious roll of what I knew must be bedding of some sort.

It consisted of a canvas hammock, with straps of leather to stretch it across the cell from iron clamps firmly fixed into the wall, a loose bag bed of coir, two blankets, and a rug, with a coir pillow about as large as a good-sized pincushion. The floor was black asphalt, polished uncomfortably bright. The whole place and everything in it seemed horribly clean. I have always had a great aversion to dirt, and before I came here thought that nothing could be too clean. But so fearfully, spotlessly clean was this terrible little cell, that I felt as if a little dirt, if I could only discover it, would be a comfort, would gave the place a more habitable look. No; a speck of dirt or an article out of its exact place seemed totally out of all question, and, I felt, would be regarded by the genius or spirit of the place, if model prison cells have such haunting them, to be a greater crime than any of its inmates had ever committed in the outer world.

The window, strongly barred and with iron frames, I climbed to by standing on the closet seat. From it, through a small open door some ten inches by four, I saw over the roofs of the houses the towering dome of St. Paul's, and I could just hear the rattle of the street traffic. My attention was then drawn to the door of my apartment; and here I found quite a mechanical study. How much inventive faculty must have been brought to bear before the different appliances of this door and its surroundings arrived at

their present almost perfect state! The first thing that attracted my attention was a cunningly contrived spyhole, covered with fine wire gauze, through which every action of a prisoner inside the cell could be observed without the slightest suspicion on his part. Below this was a trap-door, eighteen inches by twelve, cut in the door itself, but evidently all means of opening or closing it was from the outside, and not under any control of the inmate. In the wall itself, adjoining the door, about two feet from the top, was something I could not make out at all. I looked at it and studied it for some time. I wished to drive the thoughts of my position from my mind, and even trifles such as this prison-cell door and its intricacies afforded a welcome relief by diverting my ideas for a few moments from the horrors of my situation. This could not be a ventilator, as the contrivances for the free circulation of air I saw were fixed in the wall, high up over the door and down below near the floor. 'Ventilation of Prisons.' Do not these three words bring up to one's mind whole piles of Blue Books, visions of curious and wonderful diagrams in mechanics' magazines and encyclopediæ? If one-half the pains were taken to ventilate the homes of the middle and lower classes that are bestowed upon gaols, workhouses, barracks, and hospitals, how much better would it be for British humanity in general! It seems that, so long as we live 'at home at ease,' it matters little how much foul air we breathe; what dangers from asphyxia we encounter through living in hermetically sealed chambers, with gas burning and consuming its own share of oxygen and ours too. It seems no concern of either builders or architects how the middle and working classes are stifled in their homes. So long as a man remains free, and to a certain extent prosperous, he may stifle himself or others without any care of his fellow-creatures; but once let him either fall into poverty and go into the union, or into crime and get into prison, or meet with sickness and accident, then ventilation in workhouse, gaol, and hospital becomes of paramount importance.

All the talent of the country is then called out, from Dr. Reed to the infatuated man one comes across occasionally, ever ready, can he only get you into a corner, to demonstrate by working model and diagram that, if he could only find some capitalist who would advance him five hundred pounds, he would save the country countless thousands in the cost of ventilating and warming

the whole of our public and private buildings, from Windsor Castle to the last new row of houses rapidly rising into existence at either of the extreme outskirts of this ever-increasing village of London.

Assuring myself it was no ventilator, I concluded this puzzling thing must have some use. I touched it, and immediately heard a sharp click outside. Everything goes with a click or a snap in prisons. Then a gong-bell was sounded, and while I was wondering if I had done anything very wrong, and transgressed some terrible rule, the trap in the door flew open inwards, with a snap of course, forming a little shelf, and a voice sharply asked, 'Well, what is it?' Through the aperture I saw the face of a warder, not the one I had been shown into the cell by. Thinking it better to ask for something than confess I had been experimentalising for mere curiosity, I inquired if I could have writing materials to write to my solicitor. No reply; but another sharp snap, and the little trap closed as suddenly as it opened, nearly catching my nose and beard as it whisked past my face. Almost before I could recover from the start it had given me I heard a key inserted in the lock, and the door opening, the warder pointed to an inkstand, pen, and sheet of blotting-paper lying on the ground just outside the cell door. I thanked the man, who evidently was as sparing of his words as he was prompt in his action, and seeing no paper or envelopes, asked him if I could get any. Not that evening could I get them, but in the morning. I must speak to the Governor on his coming his regular rounds, and I should have what I required.

At six in the morning I was roused with the clanging sound of a large bell, and a few minutes after, before I had time to hurry on my clothes, the door of my cell was thrown open by a warder, who passed on to make room for the Deputy-Governor and another warder, the latter of whom carried a book for taking memoranda. I was asked if I required to see the doctor; if so, to give my name to be entered on his list. I was then handed two hard brushes, with which I was directed to polish the floor of my cell, and a warder instructed me as to the regulation mode of stowing my hammock and bed on the upper shelf, and folding my blankets and rug. I need hardly say my first attempts were far from satisfactory, either to myself or my instructor. Every morning I had to go on my hands and knees, and polish the cell floor, as well as wash and scrub the table, stool, basin, and every article in the room.

After breakfast, which was served through the little trap in the door, and which consisted of a pint of gruel and a piece of bread, I was told to prepare for chapel. On stepping outside of my cell on to the gallery running round the large hall, I was sharply told to turn round with my face to my cell door, to take my Bible, Prayer, and Hymn-book in my hands, and to hold them behind my back. I had ample opportunity for contemplating the outside of the door, and seeing how the various mysterious appliances connected with it were worked. I regarded with great curiosity the spy or inspection hole over the trap-door, and I then saw how cunningly it was contrived that the inmate should not be able to see that anyone was observing his movements, while it was so constructed as to enable the person looking to have an almost entire range of the interior of the apartment. I also closely examined the apparatus that caused me so much curiosity on the evening before, and discovered that, on the inmate of a cell touching the spring, it caused a bell-gong to sound and a disc to fly out with the number of the cell painted on it, so that the warder on duty on hearing the gong could see from which cell the signal for communication had been given. The prisoner inside has no control over the outside disc, so that all attempts at escaping detection if he only touched the spring for curiosity were useless.

Downstairs and along a stone passage we were marched, passing the doorway of a kitchen, where the savoury fumes advertised the fact that the soup for that day's dinner was already on the boil. Then, further on, we came to a large low-pitched hall, in the centre of which was an apartment, the walls and door of which were glazed with clear thick plate glass.

This is the consulting room, where prisoners see and consult with their solicitors, under full visible inspection of the prison officials outside; but so well has all possibility of sound escaping been provided against, that the prisoner can reveal the most important secrets to his legal adviser without fear of any other ear catching the faintest whisper. How many confessions of guilt have been poured forth into the ears of solicitors in that room! How many things so apparently mysterious to the public are there made plain to the man who is to do his best to circumvent the prosecution and get his client off! Here, too, those prisoners whose friends can obtain an order from an Alderman or Visiting Justice

can see their wives or relatives; but then the door is always left open, so that conversations can be overheard. How many a secret unknown but to the lawyer and his client could those glass walls reveal, and how many a sad tale of parting and despair could they unfold, of separation for many long years, and, in too many cases, for ever in this world, between husband and wife, mother and child, father and son! I could enumerate several who in that room took a last farewell kiss of wife and child, and of broken-hearted parent—men who, years after, when toiling on, working out their dread wearisome sentence with broken health and constitution, have looked, oh, so fondly! back to that last terrible but still sweet parting, and at last have broken down ere half their time is out, and have died in the prison infirmary, attended only by strangers, and surrounded by everything to make death, if possible, more dreadful.

I am, however, forgetful that we are marching to chapel. Leaving the glass room on our right, we ascended a dark winding stair into the chapel, a good-sized lofty square room. The first thing that struck me on entering were two large cages—large spaces parted off with iron bars. Over one of these was a gallery with a thick curtain in front, which I immediately concluded was for the exclusive use of the female prisoners. Each class of prisoners was kept separate and distinct. In one of the cages were about twenty who had been tried and sentenced, and were waiting to be drafted off to the several prisons or convict establishments at which they were to serve out their sentences.

All were cropped and shaven close, every vestige of beard being removed, and their hair clipped down to about an inch in length. They were clad in rough grey short jackets, trousers, and vests, with coarse blue striped shirts. In the opposite cage were those committed for trial; and in the body of the chapel, with our backs to the 'committals,' and facing the women's gallery and the cage full of convicted prisoners, I and some eight or ten remanded prisoners sat on open forms.

On one side of the pulpit and reader's desk was the Governor's pew, in which he was standing, inspecting the entrance and the arrangement in their respective places of the unhappy individuals under his charge. The Governor was an elderly man with short silvery hair, rather short in stature, particularly neat in his dress,

and with gleaming white teeth that attracted the eye every time he smiled, which he seemed to do somewhat mechanically. The Chaplain (or Ordinary I believe is the proper term for his reverence of Newgate) having arrived, was followed by the Deputy-Governor, who securely locked the door, and then took his station in a pew on the opposite side of the pulpit and reading-desk to that of his superior officer.

All being in their places, the door securely fastened, and the warders stationed with their respective classes of prisoners, the white head of the Governor nodded a kind of Freemasonry signal to the Chaplain to begin, while a self-complacent smile gave good opportunity for a full display of dazzling white teeth, and a spotless shirt front rose and fell as its wearer heaved a sigh of satisfaction that all his birds were there, and none had flown away during the night. Perhaps it was that the situation I was in rendered me more amenable to good and serious impressions, but never did I enter more heartily into the few and simple prayers of the Morning Service than I did that day. Prayers really prayed, without suspicion of intoning, and the reading of the Daily Lessons, with the exposition given by the reverend gentleman, were like balm to my troubled, anxious heart.

Here let me express how highly I appreciate this gentleman. During my stay in Newgate, which was for many weeks, I received from him the very kindest treatment. Without being obtrusive, he kindly and lovingly urged his great Master's message. How often have I since recalled to mind the many little acts of kindness, and the encouraging, really sweet words of comfort, 'words in season,' I have received from him! and frequently now do I remember more than one conversation we have had together. I visit London occasionally when business or family matters require me to do so, and several times have I seen him in the streets, and have been sorely tempted to go and make myself known, and thank him once again for all he did for me during those dreadful weeks I spent at Newgate. Never have I met a man more fitted for his office than he is. Few men have the gift—and it is a gift which many good men try in vain to attain—of dropping in a few seasonable words, conveying comfort judiciously mingled with reproof, that Mr. Jones possesses. Without being obtrusive, with a complete absence of anything approaching to 'cant,' he has the happy knack of just

saying to an erring man the right thing at the right time, and in the right way. If I read him aright, no one would sooner see through the hypocritical dodges of the 'very repentant sinner,' or give less encouragement to mock sighs and crocodile tears of the man who 'doth protest too much,' and who is far too ready to be 'converted' by the 'parson's patter' if he sees a chance of its getting him any prison indulgence. I only wish more of our Church clergy were like this truly worthy man. If half our English churches had incumbents like him, it would be a blessing to our country. Should these pages ever meet his eye, let him have the satisfaction of knowing that one, at any rate, of his 'parishioners' thinks of him with gratitude, not merly for his acts of kindness in a time of bitter, deep adversity, but for having caused a new light to spring up in his heart.

It was from the preaching of Mr. Jones I first grasped and realised the pure, great, simple fact that salvation was free, perfectly free, to everyone who would really, truly, and as 'a little child,' accept it with a full determination to repent truly and, by God's help—help to be obtained only but surely by fervent, sincere prayer—strive to lead a new life. He also taught me the great fact that man needs no one to stand between himself and his God but Christ his Saviour; and no man, priest or layman, ordained or unordained, consecrated or not, to be a go-between or medium between Jesus and sinful man. I always feel grateful to this prison chaplain, and were it not that I dare not, for my children's sakes, some of whom have never known of my disgrace, or where 'father travelled to those long four years,' make myself known to him, I would seek him out and personally thank him for all he did for me.

But with me and the world bygones are bygones, and many years have now passed since those bitter days; and though I have never adopted any change of name, as so many who have gone through similar troubles have been compelled to do, I have returned to the world, and the world, which has a short memory, thank goodness—at any rate the world where I live—has no idea that I, now moving in what is known as respectable life, ever wore a convict's dress.

Let me here state what I think is a remarkable fact, and which quite contradicts my own preconceived notions, and also the pre-

vailing opinion of the world—that a discharged prisoner is always in danger of being 'hunted down' by others who have known him in his hour of trouble. I suppose that during the four years that I served 'Her Majesty for nothing' I must have met and been daily seen by many hundreds of fellow-prisoners of every class and every grade; indeed, I may say thousands, taking into calculation the constant changes that were always taking place both at Millbank and Dartmoor. All these men must have known me well by sight, and more particularly as for a long time, as future pages will show, I held a special position in one of the convict establishments —a position that made me, to a great extent, prominent among the men, and moreover would bring them into a knowledge of my name, for, unlike the majority of the prisoners, I had no *alias*, and was tried, convicted, and registered under my proper name.

I have, since my liberation, visited on business many large cities in England and Ireland, and travelled a great deal by first, second, and third class carriages; have crossed the Channel some sixty or seventy times; have stayed at hotels; have visited churches, public buildings, theatres, and in fact gone everywhere, and never once have I met one man I ever saw in prison, with two exceptions, and those were men, like myself, who had been in good positions—gentlemen whom I arranged to meet. One formerly held Her Majesty's commission. I had the pleasure of seeing him off to the New World, and I often hear of his doing well in the 'Far West.' The other, a man well connected, and whom I had met and known many years before I saw him in Millbank Prison, has been a dear and good friend to me. He, poor fellow, has left this world, dying a short while since, after several years' suffering, from a cold caught at Dartmoor Prison, through the sheer brutality of a warder there, who, to please his own savage whim, compelled my poor friend, always a delicate man, and one who had lived many years in a tropical climate, to stand half undressed in front of an open window through which a pitiless storm of sleet and snow was pelting as it can only do at Dartmoor, some 1,800 feet above the sea. The weather that terrible morning was so bad that not one of the outside gangs went to work. A. was stripped to his trousers and shirt, washing, and, being the end man, was close to the window, which blew open. He stepped a few paces on one side and closed it, without first asking permission of

the brute who had charge of the ward. He was an ignorant creature, who stood greatly on his dignity; his dignity was offended, and he compelled poor A. to stand, stripped and wet as he was, at that open window for five minutes. He did so—was compelled to do so, or would have been reported; and a report by 'Long-nosed Smith' meant at the least a loss of 48 marks, equivalent to a week's remission of time, or perhaps three days' bread and water in solitary confinement. The long-nosed warder's dignity was satisfied, though he himself would rather have been disobeyed, and had a good report against what he would call a 'gentleman lag.' I dare say he forgets the circumstance among the many acts of brutality he has to my knowledge committed; but that day he murdered my friend. Poor A. caught a cold he never recovered from; it settled on his lungs, and, after a long and painful illness, it carried him off at least 10 or 15 years before his time.

I fear, however, I am wandering from the Chapel at Newgate, and going too fast into scenes that are entirely shut out from the public eye, and few of their witnesses care to tell of.

The service over, and the Chaplain having retired, the Governor was the first to lead the way out. The door having been first unlocked by his Deputy, down the stairs we marched, Indian file, with our hands behind us, like school boys saying their lessons; and at the bottom, on reaching the hall, I was beckoned to cross over to a little office where the Governor was standing, facing the door, and giving directions to a clerk at a table. I was told to take off my boots, and to stand under a machine to measure my height. I was asked my name—age—where born—when—where did I live—had I any trade or profession—married or single—how many children—had I ever been in prison before—what was my religion—could I read or write? The answers of all these were duly entered by the clerk. I was then asked if I intended to employ a solicitor—would my friends supply me with changes of linen—was I suffering from any disease or illness that would necessitate my going into the infirmary? I was then told to go over to the Chaplain's room, on the opposite side of the great hall, and under the stairs leading to the Chapel. Here I had to wait a few moments till he came in. I took a survey of the room. It was small, with a few book-shelves, containing the ordinary works one finds in a clergyman's study—the usual standard works of re-

ference on divinity; and round the room were an old set of Hogarth's Idle and Industrious Apprentices, in old black frames —I dare say they were put there in the artist's lifetime, and should not be surprised to hear he had himself presented them.

On entering, Mr. Jones bowed, and said he presumed he need not ask me the usual question, could I read and write. He inquired what I was accused of—had I good legal advice—how were my family provided for in case of matters going wrong with me. He informed me that if my friends knew any of the Visiting Justices, my wife or relations could get an order for a private visit instead of coming to the public grating, which I will presently describe. Also that there was a library in the prison, and that I could have any books to amuse myself with, and that if there were any books on his own shelves I should like to read, I was welcome to do so. He warned me that all letters, both from and to me, would be read by the Governor, and that I had better say nothing in any of them that I did not wish seen, and to caution my wife and friends to the same effect. He told me that others besides the Governor had means of access to my letters in their transit through the Governor's office, and that if they contained anything bearing on my case, it was not unlikely that the prosecutors, who in such cases employ their own detectives, would get hold of the information, and use it to their advantage. He cautioned me to leave no letters in my cell when I left it, and, if I did not require them, to destroy all letters as soon as read; for that if the prosecutors' solicitors wanted to get information, they were never very particular how they obtained it, and that half-a-crown to a warder would perhaps aid them considerably. He also cautioned me of speaking of my case or affairs to any one, official or not. I thanked him sincerely for his information and advice, and acted on it.

No sooner had I regained my cell than I received a visit from the Governor, duly attended, like any other commander-in-chief, with his aides-de-camp. He inquired if I wanted anything from him. I made some few trifling requests, which were granted. He looked all round the place up and down, and he was gone. I can hardly describe the relief this man's departure always gave me. His visits were as regular as clockwork every morning, and he was extremely polite—too much so by half—and that it was, I

think, that was so unbearable to me. I always felt that he would show me exactly the same extreme official politeness if he were going to conduct me to the gallows. Indeed, one day while I was there an execution did take place. Of course we saw nothing of it. I only heard in the very early morning the carpenters' preparations. I knew the man was to be hung, and that there was no little excitement among the public about it, and I could not lie awake in the night without thinking of him and conjecturing how near his cell might be to mine. The morning of the execution we had no chapel, but the Governor's visit was as punctual as usual, and there was the same terribly polite smile that always appeared to be so mechanical and so cold. Having superintended the hanging a man had no more disturbed his dreadful serenity than an extra new-laid egg or particularly mild bloater at his breakfast would have done. I got to loathe the man, and I am afraid I showed it.

After the Governor's diurnal visit all the remanded prisoners were called out and marched off into a stone-paved yard, surrounded by high brick walls. It was summer, and insufferably hot, and what little fresh air that might have strayed into the City was utterly powerless and incapable of getting down into that yard. Neither could the actual sunshine, but its heat did, and the place was like an oven with the lid off. Here I had an opportunity of having a look at my fellow prisoners under remand. They were of all grades of society, from the City merchant to the wretched little street arab, whose destination in all probability after Newgate would be a reformatory. Among them were no less than three Post Office letter-carriers, and one of them came in contact with me some two years after at Dartmoor, where I learned from him all his history, and a good deal of the causes and effects of Post Office letter robberies, which I will give the reader the benefit of by and by.

There were also two very decent-looking and respectably-dressed lads, who should have been at some ordinary boarding-school, but instead of studying Euclid and Delectus, their readings had been of the 'Jack Sheppard' and 'Claude Duval' style of literature in the penny dreadfuls, and they were now in Newgate awaiting their trial for burglary and half murdering an old housekeeper in some City offices. All London was horrified at the time on reading the account of the offices being robbed, and the old

housekeeper discovered weltering in her blood in a supposed dying state at the foot of the stairs. All London pictured to itself one or more terrible ruffians of the Bill Sikes stamp, men who were first-class adepts at their unlawful profession, and had graduated under scientific teaching in either Seven Dials or Whitechapel. Great was the public astonishment to find the perpetrators were two schoolboys in their teens.

Round and round the yard in Indian file, some three yards apart, did we pace for nearly an hour. Two warders were there to keep order and check any talking between the prisoners.

On certain days of the week we were visited by detectives and warders from other prisons, who came to take stock and see if there were any 'old friends.' I noticed several times that recognitions were made, and sometimes a man was called to a corner of the yard to undergo a closer scrutiny, and in more than one case I saw a comparison with photographs. Acquaintances were claimed that were not at all cordially reciprocated, and in more than one case Jones of the present moment was found to be identical with Smith of Holloway or Brown of Clerkenwell. Many were the stout protestations that the detectives or warders were mistaken, but I fancy they were generally correct. One of these men afterwards told me it was not so much the recognising the face and figure of the individual that they depended on in the first instance, as the fact that in nine cases out of ten an 'old bird' would betray himself. The moment the detectives came into the yard those whom they sought would either slink past in hopes of not being recognised, or else at once assume such a look of injured innocence, mingled with defiance, that he overdid it, when the officer 'spotted' him directly, and if he could not 'reckon him up' himself, would mark him for the attention of some one else he thought would be likely to know something of him before. Before coming into the yard where the prisoners are exercising, they invariably have a good survey from some unseen corner. They mark then the bearing and look of the prisoners before they are aware detectives are near. On entering they note any change in their demeanour. The new man, the green hand, takes little or no heed of the entrance of the officers, who are seldom in uniform; he, in his innocence, knows them not, nor the purport of their visit, and passes by as usual and without heeding. Not so the old hand. The moment

o looks upon as his enemies enter the yard he winces, way or the other I have mentioned he betrays himself. the morning exercise dinner is served, consisting of a few bread, and some two or three ounces of meat; or soup m the liquor the meat of the day before was boiled in, etables. Let me here remark that, of the four prisons I the denizens of Newgate are the worst fed of any. This both to quantity and quality. Newgate, I believe, is under nagement or superintendence of that august body the Court lermen, interfered with now and then by the still more body the Court of Common Council. Every member of o bodies has naturally, and *ex officio*, a perfect abhorrence hty people who get into prison, never mind whether even- hey turn out to be innocent or not. Such people of course punished. Punishment is the very antithesis of enjoyment sure, and no people in the world appreciate the pleasures of linners and the enjoyment of good digestion better than nen and Common Councilmen. If good digestion is a plea- ad digestion is logically a punishment, and, truly, whoever ed the mode of boiling the beef as they do at Newgate went carrying out this system of deterrent punishment. If the t is to make the meat as hard and indigestible as possible, and e same time impart as little flavour and nourishment to the p,' it is attained to perfection. The Newgate Francatelli ld give the world his receipt. With the same materials pro- ly cooked, really good dinners could be given to the prisoners; t the object is, not to get the utmost nourishment out of the eat, but to prevent the meat losing as little weight as possible in e process the authorities facetiously call 'cooking.'

During the afternoon we had another turn round the yard at xercise, and it was no little relief when I was again marched up to y cell and knew I should not be troubled to move out of it again ll next day.

A few mornings after my arrival I noticed the Governor did t look so complacently as he usually did, and a few moments terwards a warder opened my door to inform me that the overnor was not satisfied with my cell floor, and unless it was eaner and the marks effaced where I had walked up and down— aced like a caged animal, for confinement comes very hard upon

a man at first—he should take away my dinner—d
of my two or three lumps of leather-like substance
vain to persuade myself was meat. I could have repl
him do so by all means and eat it himself,' but I fir
remembered where I was, that if, as I feared, I shoul
here some time, it was not well to begin by quarrelling
authorities.

Certain days of the week were visiting days. The fri
prisoners not convicted are allowed to come and see them a
verse through wire gratings—two gratings, with a space of
three or four feet between them, in which stands or sits a w
Any parcels of clothes or other not prohibited articles are
first to the warder to see there are no 'contraband' things
them, and then, after examination, they are handed by him
prisoner. Either half-an-hour or an hour—I forget whic
visiting goes on; the prisoners—or such of them as have
come to see them—stand in a row against these railings, and
friends opposite. Everyone is talking at once with his own
and the consequence is a perfect Babel. All are too interes
their own individual matters to heed what is going on betwe
neighbour and friend. Wives and children come on different
to friends; and as I was spared the extra affliction of my
visiting me in this way, through the kindness of friends,
obtained orders for her from time to time to see me in the gl
room, I can say little or nothing as to what these meetings w
like.

When, after being several times remanded, I was at last con
mitted for trial, I found, on my return to the prison, that I was n
longer to inhabit my old cell. I was moved up a flight higher
but the regulations seemed exactly the same, except that at chape
I no longer sat in the centre of the hall, but in one of the cages
with iron bars in front, and opposite to the one where I had seen
the convicted men on my first arrival, and who had been removed
some time before to the respective prisons where their sentences
were to be worked out: those with two years and under to Hollo
way, and those for penal servitude for five years (the lowest
sentence) and upwards, either to Millbank or Pentonville, where
nine months' 'separate' confinement takes place previous to the
drafting into what is called 'The Works,' *i.e.* one of the convic

establishments at Chatham, Portsmouth, Portland, or Dartmoor, unless a man is insane, in which case he is sent to the Lunatic Convict Prison at Broadmoor.

So long as a man is in prison before trial and condemnation, he has no work of any sort to do beyond the cleaning his own cell and utensils. Books are allowed him and writing materials. Whatever a man writes is inspected and read by the Governor; and every sheet of paper—writing paper—is counted and has to be accounted for. This is with a view of preventing prisoners from writing letters to their friends outside without their undergoing the inspection of the Governor.

That Love laughs at locksmiths is an old saying, and so he does at gaolers, however keen their watch may be. I wanted to write many things to my wife I did not care about the authorities seeing, and I set to work how to scheme it. I did not want to waste money on bribing the warders, though I saw there were several who were to be purchased at a very reasonable price; so I adopted another plan. Every morning a certain number of small sheets of blue paper were served out to each man for closet purposes. It mattered little to me whether the paper I wrote on was blue or green. I managed to get from one of the warders a very liberal supply every day, and in a few days saved up quite a little stock of it. When I had pen, ink, and paper to write my *authorised* letters, I wrote on the Governor's paper just so much as I cared about his seeing, and on the little sheets of blue paper I wrote all I wished to be private. My next difficulty was to get it carried out of prison and posted to my wife.

One day my solicitor came, and after our interview in connection with my defence was finished, I asked him to take my letter and post it. He refused, expressing his great regret at being compelled to do so, but said he was under a pledge. I will not be sure he did not say he was sworn not to convey anything out for a prisoner. I then changed the conversation, and suggesting some alterations in the statement I had written out for him to prepare the brief upon, arranged that I should make the alterations, and his clerk should call for them. The clerk did so later in the day. I did not *ask* the young man, who came to the glass room to me, as I had his master, whether he would post it or not, but gave it to him as if it was of no consequence, and simply

desired him to post it. He did so, and it arrived safely at its destination.

Again I wanted to write just before the trial. I did so, and very voluminously, for I had much to say. This packet I handed from the dock in court, before judge, jury, and everyone else, to Mr. Lewis, and asked him to give it to a relative who was near at hand, and he did so. Whether he knew what it was, or anyone noticed or not, I do not know, but that also reached its destination in safety.

My object in writing these pages being not to bring myself too prominently forward or make myself the hero of my own story, but to give an authentic narrative of the convict service from a point of view not often offered to the world, I will say nothing of my trial beyond the fact that, though the prosecutors were bound to take the proceedings they did, they were quite aware I was not the man they would have liked to have seen in the dock. They gave me a strong recommendation to mercy, which the judge afforded me the full benefit of by pronouncing the lightest sentence the law would permit him to do—Five Years' Penal Servitude.

When I returned to Newgate after my conviction and sentence, I immediately came under another class, and my real imprisonment commenced. On arrival I was marched downstairs to the same floor as the baths. There I stripped off the clothes of a free Englishman to don those of a convict. I had been previously told that whatever clothes I wore or had when convicted would be forfeited; I took care therefore not to wear too good a suit, and all the extra clothes I had in the prison for change I had sent away previously; so that what I stood upright in was all I 'forfeited to the Crown.' The warder who acted as my valet in supplying me with my new suit informed me that when I was discharged—'if you live to go through it,' he kindly added in a parenthesis—Her Most Gracious Majesty would give me a brand-new suit to make my reappearance in the world in. To say I felt easy in either body or mind in my new costume would be far from the truth.

When I had completed my horrid toilet, and selected from a bundle of greasy, dirty-looking things what was supposed to be a woollen cap of the Scotch bonnet type, I heartily thanked God there was no looking-glass near.

On being marched off to my cell, I found I had to mount higher

in the world, to the top landing, and I was located on the north side of the hall, having hitherto been on the south.

The first thing that struck me on entering my new abode was a smell of tar—'good, wholesome, honest tar.' Having been at sea several times in my early life, and always more or less connected with shipping, the smell was not in any way disagreeable, but it told me my long days of forced idleness had come to an end. I should have very little time for reading. The smell of tar just gave me a gentle hint that oakum-picking was one of the occupations prison authorities have invented for their charges to amuse themselves with.

The cell was an exact counterpart of the other, except that the dust from the oakum had taken off a good deal of the brilliant cleanliness of the floor and walls.

That night I slept but little. What I had dreaded had come to pass. It was an actual fact; I was a convict. Until the sentence was pronounced it seemed a long way off, but now it was too terribly near. Five long years; yet mine was the lightest sentence of any that session. How grateful did I feel when I compared my sentence of five with that of others—fourteen and twenty years, and even life! The man sentenced just before me had a 'lifer,' and another one in another court twenty years from another judge. When my judge said five years I could have hugged him in gratitude. My heart sent up one long silent shout of praise and thanksgiving to heaven. All that night I thought of my own good fortune, my own light sentence compared to the dreadful ones of others. I uttered praises and thanks. Five years would soon slip by. I looked back and saw how quickly the last five years had passed, and took courage. I thought how soon five years would pass, and I had hopes. I was still a young man. I should barely be middle-aged at the end of my time. Five years! I could, with God's help, survive that, and return once again to my dear ones, whom I had in the meantime left to struggle on in a cold world without me. When I thought of one man I had seen a day or two before, who had been sentenced to twenty years the first day of the sessions, who tried to look callous and unconcerned, and to pass it off with a laugh, I shuddered as I tried to imagine what he now felt, alone in his cell, and as I did so again thanked heaven that my lot was only five.

The next morning, while I was cleaning my cell, three pieces of junk or old rope, that had been part of the standing rigging of some old ship, were flung into my cell, with an intimation that I should have a 'fiddle' presently. What a fiddle might be I knew not, and hardly gave myself the trouble to conjecture. After some little time a warder I had never seen before, except at a distance, entered my cell, and told me I should have to pick 4 lbs. of oakum every day while I was there, or else my 'grub would run short.' I mentally replied, I hope you may get it. However, as he saw I knew no more about picking oakum than I did of Chinese, he said he would come after breakfast and set me to rights, so I had a little respite. I looked at my hands and sighed, 'Farewell, a long farewell, to all thy whiteness.' If anyone prides himself on a nice hand and filbert nails, let him steer clear of oakum-picking.

After breakfast the taskmaster warder came in, bringing with him the 'fiddle' on which I was to play a tune called 'Four pounds of oakum a day.' It consisted of nothing but a piece of rope and a long crooked nail. He first showed me how to break up the block of junk and to divide the strands of the rope. The 4 lbs. in three small blocks did not look so very much after all, but when pulled to pieces and divided into strands it seemed to grow wonderfully in size, and my heart began to sink. I at once congratulated myself on not being a large eater, as there was no doubt but my 'grub' would run *very* short if it depended on my oakum-picking. Then, when the strands were all divided, he showed me how to pull them to pieces, and how to use the fiddle to help me. I set to work, making up my mind it must be done. I made but slow progress, and found it hurt my finger and thumb ends, for they were quite unused to any such work. When I had worked for an hour I looked at the heap of oakum at my side and felt quite encouraged, it looked such a lot; but when I turned round and saw the row of strands of rope on the other side, and how little inroad I had made into my task, my heart sank again within me.

I was now on the side of the prison nearest to Newgate Street. My cell was on the top floor, and my window open, so that now I heard much plainer than before the noise of the street traffic, and I could not help a sigh when I thought how long it would be before I could join again in the busy throng of free men.

At chapel next morning I, with others who had been tried at

the same sessions, was marched into the cage under the women's gallery and locked in. Once a day only were we exercised out of doors, and that in another much smaller yard than I had walked in before.

Every morning the quantum of 'junk' was served out, and in the evening the taskmaster came round with weights and scales to take each man's oakum. When a prisoner had picked his 4 lbs. his time was his own, and he might do what he liked, but I never did complete my quantum. I had to work away till the time for collecting the oakum arrived, about 9 P.M. The first day I did not do six ounces. I expected every day the Governor would find fault, but as every day the quantity I picked increased, and they saw I always kept at work, nothing was said, till one day the Governor said he must have a certain quantity done, and he reduced my allowance from 4 lbs. to 3 lbs., and insisted on my doing that. The utmost I had ever done in one day before was 2½ lbs., so I began to think trouble was before me.

One morning the Chaplain walked into my cell, and, sitting down, he entered into conversation as usual. This was the first visit I had had from him since my conviction. He watched me at work for some time.

'I see you are not used to that work,' said he; 'let me do a little, and show you an easier method.'

He then took some of the strands and showed me that, by beating and rubbing them, a lot together, they are softened very materially, which rendered the after-work of picking them to pieces much easier. He then asked me what sentence I had received, and told me there was nothing for me now to do but to resign myself to it.

'You must,' said he, 'just consider yourself a slave till your time is out. Every action of your life will have to be just what your taskmasters may command you to do. Try and bear up meekly and submissively. Avoid giving offence to any of the officials, and remember that, though your body is condemned to slavery, your thoughts, your mind, and heart are free—free to commune with God, free to pray, free to praise, and free to repent. You may in after-life reclaim yourself and actually look back upon this very punishment as a blessing. Blessings you little dream of may, by God's mercy, arise out of what is now so bitter a trial.'

He then explained to me that by good conduct I could get a remission of between twelve and thirteen months off my time.

About four or five days after my sentence—I think it was on a Saturday—a warder entered my cell with another prisoner to crop and shave me. I knew this must come, but dreaded it greatly. Shaving I had renounced for many years, and wore my beard long and full, and years ago the idea of being shaved by another man was always most repugnant to me, and what I had never more than two or three times submitted to. I begged to be allowed to shave myself; but no! that was quite contrary to rules. Whether they thought I should attempt to cut my own throat I know not, but I had to submit, and painful enough it was, for the volunteer barber was very far from a proficient. I was clean scraped, and my hair clipped to about half to three-quarters of an inch long.

The prisoner, who during the operation was very communicative and was not interrupted by the warder, told me he had done a 'lagging' before, and knew what it all was, and among a great deal he told me, the major part of which I found to be very incorrect, was that shaving had been abolished on the 'works,' as some men had cut their throats, but that the beards were cropped down as close as scissors could clip them without cutting the skin.

The only things I had been allowed to retain in Newgate were my comb, brushes, and tooth-brush. Alas! they were almost useless now, for it would have puzzled the cleverest of Truefitt's 'artistes' to have made a parting in my short hair.

Sometimes in the night my cell door would be opened, and the flash of a lantern thrown suddenly across my face would wake me up. It was the Deputy-Governor or Chief Warder going his rounds. Let me here say that the Deputy of Newgate I found as agreeable a man as his superior was the opposite. While being firm and properly strict, he was not without feeling and kindness of heart. One day, on my asking some trifling favour of him, he said he thought it was hardly the strict rule of the prison, yet I should have it hard enough by and by, and he would grant it.

My departure from Newgate was now drawing nigh. I was soon to remove from the vulgar City, but where to I could not learn; in fact the officials themselves know not till the order comes down whether a man is to be sent to the 'salubrious air' of Pen-

tonville Model Prison, or to the more fashionable West-end quarter near South Belgravia, Millbank Penitentiary.

A few nights before our removal I was aroused by the sounds of the hurrying to and fro on the landings by warders in boots. Warders on night duty always wear slippers, and steal about from spyhole to spyhole as noiselessly as cats. This night there was a great scuffling and tramping about for some little time. In the morning I heard the cause of it. The prisoner who was in the end cell of the landing, with only the roof of one of the buildings and the prison wall between him and the street, the Old Bailey, had made an attempt to escape. I believe he had a long sentence, fourteen or twenty years. He had picked up a nail, or else taken the nail out of his 'fiddle' and straightened it. With this he had laboured hard and picked out a brick from the roof of his cell. The labour of getting out that first brick with such an instrument must have been very great. One brick removed, the getting others out was comparatively easy work. He succeeded in removing sufficient to get his body through, and the slate roof was close above him, and had he been a determined man, liberty was before him—at least liberty to get into the street, where his chance of escape rested entirely on the vigilance of the policemen in the neighbourhood. He intended to have made a rope of his blankets and rug, but by the time he had done so much it was getting daylight. Whether it was that he saw it had taken him so long to effect what he had done, and that it was getting daylight and too many people would be about in the streets to give him anything like a fair prospect of success, or whether his heart suddenly failed him or not I cannot tell, but he desisted from all further attempts, sounded his signal spring gong, and on the warder coming to see what was wanted, quietly showed him his night's work. The officer instantly gave the alarm, and brought all who were on night duty to the scene, and their scuffling noise it was that woke me up. Till the man himself sounded his signal that called the warder, no suspicion was aroused, and had he continued his work I really think he would have succeeded in reaching the street. How it was the warder never heard him at work, or the sound of the bricks falling, I cannot tell, unless he was himself asleep. Of course, when all need of vigilance was at an end, the warders were all as active and as fussy as so many bluebottles; and I should not

be at all surprised if, in reporting it to the aldermen and chief authorities, they took great praise to themselves for the activity they had displayed; and have no doubt but that some paragraph appeared with a panegyric on the wonderfully astute Governor of Newgate, whose extreme sagacity had prevented the escape of a convict. I know not myself who to blame most, the man for suddenly desisting from his attempt after having got over the most difficult part of it, or the remissness of the prison authorities in permitting the possibility of such a thing, with all the appliances of 'inspection holes' and other artful contrivances to see and know everything a prisoner does. Had the warder gone his rounds properly and peeped into every cell, he must have discovered what the man was doing long before he got out the first brick. By this attempt at escape the stupid fellow would lose all, or at any rate the greater part, of his remission, and would be a marked man during the whole of his time. He had been more than once convicted before, and had been a receiver of stolen goods. In this case he had instigated young shopmen in some ready-made tailor's or outfitter's shop to rob the stock, and he had received and disposed of the plunder. Those are the men to catch, and who richly deserve the punishment they get.

Before bidding farewell to Newgate let me say that I considered at the time there were many matters could be greatly improved. I see there is a different Governor there now. He who was Governor when I was there does not now rule there, and possibly many changes may have taken place. The whole system appeared to me, and more particularly after I had experienced how the Government convict establishments are managed, to be a bad copy of some other place. I was quite surprised to find that everyone, warders and officials, were perfectly ignorant of the system and discipline pursued at the convict establishments. Not one knew anything of convict life. The discipline was strict in some things and lax in others. There was a great deal of show and fussiness—very many irritating regulations that had no earthly use. The place is made too much of a City show of, where aldermen and other civic authorities are fond of bringing their friends to see how cleverly the great City manages everything—prisons among others. It always struck me that the whole management was a burlesque copy of a great original with which the copyist was only

imperfectly acquainted. It was Solouque's imitation of Napoleon over again, Solouque in this case having very white teeth and hair, and being given to the wearing of spotless shirt fronts.

A great many more people are committed by magistrates for trial than are ever found guilty. There are many cases where a magistrate will not take upon himself the responsibility of either discharging or condemning an accused person, and therefore sends the case to be tried before a jury. In many cases bail can be and is given, and the accused person is at liberty till the day appointed for his trial. But it is not everyone who can get bail. When a man is accused of any offence against the law it is only his true friends who are likely to stand by him, and though they may be very respectable, yet their bail may not be accepted.

Again, a man may have every disposition to aid his friend or relative in trouble, but he has a wife and family, and must look to them, and hesitates before rendering himself liable as bail. Therefore, the fact of a man not obtaining bail is no proof of his non-respectability. Till a man is found guilty, the theory is that he is presumed to be innocent. Very many men are acquitted, and after leaving Newgate return to their friends and their customary avocations. These men—men untried—should be treated very differently from the way they are; so long as they are kept secure from escape, the main object of their detention is effected. There is no necessity for their being mixed up and brought in contact with men who are convicted. The system of friends' visitation is essentially bad, and I believe many a man who on trial is acquitted, and is supposed to 'leave the court without a stain upon his character,' has suffered great injury by being seen on the wrong side of the bars of the double grating on visiting days. I do not mean being seen by his own friends, but by the friends of others. The reader, or anyone, goes to visit a friend in trouble; he is shown to the grating, and some time elapses before the person he wants is sent for, and comes down from his cell. While waiting he naturally looks about and sees a number of persons on the bad side of the double bars. Some, more or less, of those faces he may remember; one or two may make an impression on his memory. These very men possibly, nay probably, are acquitted, and elsewhere their faces are seen and recognised. 'Where can I have met that man before?' In Newgate! A prejudice is at

once conceived; possibly the spotless man may be of a pharisaical turn, and, thanking God he is not as that other man, has never been in prison, except to see his unfortunate friend or relative, he may turn to whatever companion he may be with and say, 'Do you see that man? I saw him in Newgate when I went to see so and so.' Like thistle-down blown into a neighbour's field, the injury is spread, and no one knows what the injury may be, or where it may end. Oh, but, I think I hear the righteous reader explain, people should not get into prison, and if they do things that render them liable to be put there they must put up with the consequences. But very innocent people are accused sometimes, and oftentimes; and if it it is possible to prevent such an injury as I have endeavoured to point out, it *should* be done, and it *can* be done. Persons awaiting trial should not be sent to the same prison with others who are convicted, and they should be permitted to see their friends more privately than they are. There is no reason why, on certain fixed days, friends should not have access, under proper regulations, to remanded prisoners in their respective cells.

Newgate is no longer adapted for its requirements, and the sooner the City magnates make a change the better. At certain times, just before the sessions at the Central Criminal Court, Newgate is frequently crowded. All prisoners from Horsemonger Lane Gaol and other prisons who are committed to take their trial at the Old Bailey Sessions are sent to Newgate for the convenience of being close at hand to the courts, and can be readily brought from their cells into the dock as their cases are called on.

Many of the minutiæ of Newgate discipline and management are frivolous and absurd in the extreme. Why should untried, unconvicted men, many of whom have been in far superior positions to the Governor of Newgate, be ordered to march to chapel with their hands behind them like schoolboys? There are no such petty and irritating annoyances as this even in a convict establishment, where everything is as strict as it can be made. Little things like these very greatly add to the discomfort of men who are already sufficiently harassed by the position they are placed in. If they are afterwards proved guilty, goodness knows they will have punishment enough and irritating annoyances sufficient. If they are acquitted, why should they be punished to please the whim of a would-be martinet, or some aldermanic Solon, whose right posi-

tion would be Prime Minister of Laputa? It is quite time to commence punishment and strict discipline when a man is found guilty.

The food and its so-called cooking I have already mentioned. The warders were not a bad set at all, but there seemed far too few of them to do the duty. This, no doubt, is on account of the very fluctuating population of this City prison. At times during my stay there were not a dozen prisoners in chapel—at others it was crowded. When the place is full, and especially on visiting days, the duty is very heavy, and the hours are far too long. No wonder a night warder falls asleep occasionally.

About three weeks after my conviction, one morning, greatly to my surprise, no oakum was served out. On my asking the warder for my task, he said, 'Oh, you will have a holiday to-day.'

The prisoner who had acted as barber, and was an 'old lag,' passing the door, told me, 'Never mind cleaning your cell, we are all off to-day.'

'Off! Where to?' Now the real servitude was to commence. Where was I to go to—what labour should I be set to—were questions that flashed across my brain. I knew that I should never be put to hard manual labour, as I had a certain bodily infirmity that would preclude my digging, wheeling barrows, or doing any of the hard work I had heard convicts are set to. Both the Chaplain and the Doctor had told me that.

After breakfast I was summoned to go down into the hall below, and was told to bring all my letters, if I wished to keep them, and my comb and brushes. My letters I destroyed, instead of bringing them, as I knew not whose hands they might pass through.

On reaching the hall below we were all mustered in two rows, and after answering to our names, and having our respective crimes and sentences read over to us, to which we had to assent, each man was handcuffed. This was my first acquaintance with the 'Darbies,' the first time I had ever been deprived of the free use of my hands, and it was with some difficulty I kept down the swelling lump in my throat. A mingled feeling of shame, rage, and indignation came over me. Then a better thought succeeded, and with a silent prayer for strength and grace, I tried to make up my mind to submit to my fate as resignedly as possible.

We were then all marched down the gloomy stone passages to

the yard, where our carriages awaited us. These were the usual 'Black Marias,' some four of five of which were drawn up in the prison yard. The one I was in was different from any other I had travelled in before. By standing up I could, through the top ventilating grating, just catch a glimpse of the streets we passed through—over Blackfriars Bridge, along Stamford Street, York Road, over Westminster Bridge, past the Abbey and Parliament Houses, down the Horseferry Road, and in due time we drove within the portals of the Millbank Penitentiary.

CHAPTER II.

MILLBANK.

THE whole length of our journey from Newgate to Millbank some of the prisoners kept up the most discordant noises, shouting and singing—whether for joy or not I cannot say.

On alighting from the 'Sable Maria' we were ushered through a door into a long white-washed passage, with cells on one side and windows on the other. The windows looked into the roadway inside the gates, where the carriages had driven in. The cells looked into a large open space, divided by railings. The space is surrounded by the different wards of the pentagon. Millbank consists of six pentagons, or what an Irishman would call squares with five sides to them. These pentagons are numbered 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6, and in the centre is a large octagon chapel, not very unlike Rowland Hill's Chapel, in the Blackfriars Road, only that is, I believe, round. On four sides of each pentagon are prison wards, with the cell windows looking into the yards. The fifth side, the centre one adjoining the chapel, is for officers' quarters, Governor's house, &c. The large centre chapel is for Protestants, and in No. 2 pentagon, when I was there, there was a temporary building, fitted as a Roman Catholic chapel. Since my stay there the place has been altered to some extent in the internal arrangements. I believe all the women are removed elsewhere, and several of the pentagons have been fitted entirely for military

prisoners. I can only describe what it was in my time, which was before Brixton Prison was made a convict establishment for separates and Wandsworth for women.

The first thing on entering each man was released from his handcuffs, and told to seat himself on a long bench in the passage. Presently two chief warders, one a fine, military-looking man, and the other a little man, arrived, accompanied by a medical officer and a clerk. On their appearance we were told to rise and stand to 'attention,' and the warders saluted their superiors in orthodox military style. The official party went into a cell, fitted up as an office, and the examination and classification of the prisoners began.

One of the chief warders walked along one line and good-humouredly at once claimed more than one of our party as old acquaintances. Asked their names, 'What name were you in last time?' was a question that called forth a laugh all round.

By the time that certain preliminary preparations had been gone through, and all the papers brought with each prisoner from Newgate, with full particulars of his name, case, crime, and sentence, had been examined and entered into a book in the office, it was 12 o'clock, and dinner time. While this was proceeding inside the office, the shorter of the two chief warders read the rules of the establishment, and gave the men a little good advice as to what they were to do. The principal regulations he read were those as to marks and remission of time.

Every prisoner on first entering the convict service has to undergo nine months of separate confinement in a cell by himself, working in that cell, and never leaving it except for exercise or to go to chapel. During that nine months no remission is given; but for the remainder of his time, if he obtains the full quantum of eight marks a day, which can only be earned by good conduct and the completion of his day's work, whatever that may be, he is allowed a remission of equal to three months in each year, or one-fourth of his sentence, except the nine months. The full amount of marks for a man to earn in a year is 2,920. If less than this number are earned then so much remission is lost. It is very seldom a man goes through a whole term of service without losing some marks. I reckoned very quickly that it was just possible I could get twelve months and three weeks remission off my five

years. I actually got off twelve months and ten days. On this mark system I shall have a good deal to say further on. Like all other human systems it is not perfection, though good in theory.

We were informed that presently we should be asked what religion we were. Each man might please himself what he chose to be, but what he now elected he must stick to. Proselytism is not countenanced in Her Majesty's convict service. The bill of fare for each day in the week was read out to us.

Three days a week three ounces of beef or mutton, with potatoes or other vegetables. Two days one pint of soup, and one day, on Thursdays, neither meat nor soup, but one solid pound of suet-pudding, containing at least two and a half ounces of suet, and on Sundays nothing but bread and cheese. Of the quality of these articles I will descant as we come to them. Sometimes, instead of either beef or mutton, salt pork was given. For breakfast three-quarters of a pint of cocoa, and for supper one pint of porridge or gruel. Every morning at breakfast-time each man was served with a good-sized loaf of bread. How many ounces it was I don't remember, but it was always more than I could manage to eat. If a man chose to eat it all at one meal he got no more till next day.

After the rules had been read it was 12 o'clock, and we were ordered in batches of four or five, into some of the cells, each man having given to him previously a loaf of bread and a piece of very good cheese. Here I was kept for a long time, but I could hear that the officials had returned, and were at work with the other fresh arrivals. With me, in the same cell, was the elder of the two boys whom I mentioned before as having half murdered the old housekeeper. He was sentenced to seven years and his brother to two years. I believe he was sent away from Millbank to a Reformatory to do his term. I was very much shocked and disgusted at this youngster. I am not over-squeamish, but to see a boy of thirteen years, not only callous as he was, but boastful of his crime, was dreadful. He gave a full account of his whole proceeding, and told us how he battered the old woman's head with a hammer, while his brother did his best to hold her down; £70, I think he said, they got out of a cash-box they took from the office, and of this they squandered about half in a few days. Not contented with having one revolver each, he told us they had bought

two each. What ought the men who sold such things to these children have received? Six months at the very least. I have heard from prisoners many tales of their villanies, but not from anyone did I hear so cool and barefaced a narrative as from this youngster. Unless he very much mends his ways I fear he will be heard of again. He confessed he not only urged his brother into it, but compelled him to be as bad as himself, and had thrashed him many times for 'turning cocktail.' I found from a few questions I asked that his head had been stuffed with the rubbish he had read of gentlemen pirates, highwaymen, and bandit captains.

The reader will ask why did I countenance the youngster to tell his boasting tale, and did I not reprove him? I was but one among many there present, one or two of whom were unmitigated scoundrels and encouraged the boy. When I did say a word to check or reprove him, he only laughed, and the others cried me down. At last, thoroughly disgusted with him, and feeling completely cast down to think I was to be the companion of such wretches as some of these men were, I got up on to a table under the window and looked out on to the Pentagon yard, where a sight met my eyes that soon attracted all my thoughts and attention away from the boy and his admirers.

Walking round the yard, or rather the division nearest to our cell window, were about five and twenty prisoners in Indian file, as at Newgate, and about five or six yards apart. In the centre stood a warder in uniform, with a staff like a policeman's in his hand. The men were dressed very differently from us Newgate men, and struck me at first as being somewhat fantastically and picturesquely costumed. I could not avoid recalling certain chorus singers I had seen at the opera. Each man was dressed in a short loose jacket and vest, and baggy knickerbockers of drab tweed with black stripes, one and a half inches broad. The lower parts of their legs were encased in blue worsted stockings with bright red rings round them; low shoes and a bright grey and red worsted cap, which each man wore in accordance to his own taste, completed the costume. One thing spoiled it. All over the whole clothing were hideous black impressions of the Broad Arrow ↑, the 'crow's foot,' denoting the articles belonged to Her Majesty.

The way each man wore his cap was not at all a bad index

to the man himself. Some were adjusted very neatly so as to form a good imitation of a cavalry forage cap, and, when jauntily set on one side of the head, proclaimed its poor wearer had been a smart, decent fellow in the 'outer world,' and had not yet had all self-respect and ideas of personal appearance entirely crushed out of him. Another would wear his hanging down like a bag, as Neapolitan fishermen and crews of swell yachts wear theirs; others again made bad attempts to imitate these two, while some seemed as if their object was to make themselves look as hideous as possible, and wore them sticking up stiff and straight, as high as they would, as if their model was a Pierot or The Perfect Cure. Each man carried a towel with him, and I noticed that every now and then one or two would leave the rank and go into a little building in one corner of the yard, while others would emerge from the same and take their places in the 'walking round.' The men coming out I noticed had all wet towels, which told me it was bathing-day with them, and the little building in the corner was a bath-house. I found before a week was over my conjectures were correct.

Two other prisoners I noticed were pulling about a large roller, and keeping the gravelled yard in good order, and this rolling seemed to be considered a sort of privilege, as I could see several of the prisoners address the warder as they passed him, and every now and then he would call to those rolling to desist, and others who had spoken to the warder took their places.

Presently the door of our cell was opened, and we were ordered out. I found all my other fellow-travellers from Newgate had disappeared; I was ordered to go to the end of the passage, where the principal of the receiving ward was standing. I did not like his looks, but became better acquainted with him afterwards, and liked him very well. He ordered me to strip and go into a bath down some steps. I obeyed of course; in a very few minutes he called to me and threw me a towel, telling me to dry myself and come out. This, too, I did; and on reaching the top of the steps leading from the bath, found my clothes had disappeared. There stood the principal, however, who whisked the towel out of my hand and threw it away, and told me to stand up, naked as I was. 'Turn round.' 'Lift both arms.' 'Lift the right leg.' 'Now, the left.' 'Hold up the sole of the foot.' 'Now, the other.' 'Now, stoop.' 'Stand

up.' 'Open your mouth.' 'Here, take this bundle of clothes, and put them on, but don't finish dressing till the doctor has seen you.'

The object of all this examination is that no prisoner should have a chance of concealing anything about his person, and bringing into the prison anything likely to aid him in escape. The bundle he handed me contained a complete suit of clothes of the same picturesque pattern as those worn by the men I had seen exercising. Every article was quite new, and had never been worn; consequently their stiffness was not at all conducive to their comfort. Among them were a new flannel, under-waistcoat, and pair of drawers. It was August. If there is one thing I abominate more than another it is new flannel, and you may depend upon it that the Government does not supply convicts with 'superfine Welsh.' I tried to shirk them, but the principal, seeing what I was at, stopped me, saying, 'Put them on now; when you get to your cell you can wear them or not as you like, but if you don't take them now you will have none all the winter.' His hint was kind, and I acted upon it, thanking him for giving it to me.

Till I undressed to go to bed that night I had a most lively idea of what penitents of the Romish Church experience when wiping out their peccadilloes by wearing hair shirts. I must during those hours have cleared off a long score of mine.

I was then called into the room where the doctor was, and here I saw another chief warder—an enormous man with an enormous voice, who looked very fierce, but through whose fierceness I fancied I saw a twinkle of good nature, and I saw correctly. Here, to my surprise, was handed to me a bundle which I at once recognised as the clothes, even to the hat and boots, I had worn before my conviction—my last habiliments of freedom.

'Do you identify those as your clothes?' 'Yes, I did.' They were ruthlessly cast aside into a corner where plenty of other bundles were lying. My comb and brushes and toothbrush were set on one side, and a ticket with my name and a number placed with them. 'I should have no use for such things there.' I begged for the toothbrush. 'If you are particular about your teeth, my man,' said the big chief warder, 'use a corner of your towel.' I was asked several questions as to my age, business or trade, and was this my first conviction of any sort.

The doctor told me to strip off my shirt, and he made a medical

examination of me, sounding my lungs with the stethoscope, and going through the usual formula on such occasions. I was measured in height, in girth of chest, and was weighed. The doctor took note of my physical infirmity, and said I must go into a light labour class.

A conversation took place between the doctor and the gigantic official, the purport of which I hardly understood at the time, but when I came to read the rules over I very soon did. He suggested, first, that I seemed a respectable man. I bowed to him at that. Secondly, that I was likely to make all my marks, but if in light labour could not get more than seven marks a day. This I found would have lost me one-half my remission. The doctor said he would make a note and see to that and what I could do. I was then asked what religion I was—Catholic or Protestant.

A card was then given to me with a number on it, which I was told was my number, and to which I was always to answer, as prisoners left their names behind them, and were never addressed by them while in Millbank. I then went into the cell where I had been locked up with the other men, where I found a lot of clothes —prison clothes of all sorts and sizes, and was told to fit myself as speedily as possible, for the suit first of all given me was a great deal too large, and might have been made for Daniel Lambert or the big chief warder.

When fully equipped, and feeling very uncomfortable, I was marched off down a passage and through a door at the foot of a winding spiral stone staircase into the Pentagon yard—across this and through a gate or two in the dividing railings and into a similar door—up a spiral stone staircase like the first one I had passed—one flight—two flights—three flights—to the very top, where I was transferred by the warder who had conducted me so far to the care of another warder, and he at once pointed out the way along the passage to a cell, the door of which he opened and introduced me to my first lodging under Her Majesty's roof. The little ticket with my number on he took from me, placed it in a rack over the doorway, and shut me in.

If the reader has ready access to an ordinary map of London, he will see on the northern bank of the River Thames, and near to Vauxhall Bridge, a thing that looks at first glance like a star-fish. That is Millbank Penitentiary. If the map is a large one it will

give him a very fair idea of the ground plan of the place. If the reader is a resident in London and passes by either on the river or the road, he may readily form a fair idea of the internal construction of the building so as to follow my descriptions.

The numberless windows seen on the outside are not, as many erroneously suppose, the windows of prisoners' cells. These windows serve to light the passages running between them and the cell gates and doors. Every cell has a strong iron gate opening outwards into the wide stone corridor or passage, and a wooden door opening inwards to the cell. Opposite the door is a large window about three feet square, looking into the inner yard or Pentagon. There are four storeys of these cells, all of which are alike and of good size, being about ten feet square, or perhaps they may be 12 × 10. The round towers at the corner of each angle of every block of buildings, surmounted with pointed roofs, contain the spiral stone staircases leading from the ground floor to the top landing. On each floor are sinks with water supply, and other conveniences for the wards of that corridor. Every Pentagon is numbered, and each block of buildings is denoted by a letter, A, B, C, &c. Each floor or landing contains four passages and rows of cells branching off at an angle at the staircases in the towers. Every floor contains two wards, each ward consisting of two of these landings or passages and the cells appertaining to them, and every ward is divided from the other by a door. The doorway is placed in the corridor at the centre tower of each block, every Pentagon having three towers. The other two towers form the respective centres of their wards, and the officer or warder standing at this point can, by looking to the right and left, command a full view of the length of each of the two passages of his ward, thus having control over his charge with very little trouble.

The ground enclosed within the wall surrounding the whole building is used for garden purposes, for cultivation of vegetables for the use of the prison carried on by the prisoners' labour. Not one cell in the whole building looks outwards upon the world. All are turned inwards. When the windows are being cleaned in the corridors or passages is the only time a prisoner has a chance of seeing anything of the world he is shut in from. I need hardly say the window cleaning in the two upper corridors, particularly of those wards that command a view of the river, is regarded as

somewhat of a holiday treat, and not a little sought after, for though it is but a glimpse of the world one has left, it still helps to bring to the memory visions of home.

Each convict establishment has a governor and deputy-governor, one or more chief warders (Millbank had no less than three), who have under them three grades of officials: principals, warders, and assistant warders. The slang name for all the officials is 'screws.' All are armed in some way. Chiefs and principals, when *en grande tenue,* wear swords. Warders and assistant warders, when within the prison, are armed with truncheons, which are carried in cases at the side. When with a gang of men at outdoor work, these truncheons are replaced by a short rifle and bayonet. In addition, there is at Dartmoor and other prisons away from London, the civil guard, armed with rifles and bayonets, who do military duty in guarding the place. Of the duties of the civil guard I shall speak when I get to Dartmoor. Millbank being so near to the barracks at Westminster, there is little need to have a special guard of its own.

Every block of buildings and every ward in Millbank Prison is in communication with each other, and all radiate from the centre of the whole establishment, where the chapel is. Though to an outside observer it looks like a number of detached buildings, it is possible to visit every cell and every ward without once going into the open air.

On being locked into my cell, the first thing I did was to examine it well and its contents. Opposite to the door, and on the floor, was a raised wooden platform, extending right across the cell. It was about 6 inches from the floor of stone flags. At one end of this platform was a step, about 4 inches higher and 12 inches deep. This platform I afterwards found was my bed-place, on which the straw mattress, now neatly rolled up, was laid, and the step acted as bolster, on which I made a pillow of my clothes, no pillow being provided. On the top of the bed were very neatly rolled up, in a perfectly different way to the bedding at Newgate, three blankets, a rug, and two coarse linen sheets. A wooden platter and spoon, a wooden salt-box, two tin pint mugs, a bright pewter chamber utensil, an ordinary school slate, a large wooden bucket or pail, with wooden flat hoops, and fitted with a close-fitting lid, a short-handled hair-broom or brush, a stiff mill-board,

with a copy of the prison rules and regulations, and a small gas-jet, without tap, protruding from the wall about 4 feet from the ground, completed the inventory. No; I had forgotten one thing I afterwards found the use of, which, till it was explained to me by the warder, I was at a loss to discover. It was a thin lath of wood, 3 feet long, 2½ inches wide, and ¼ inch thick. One-half painted on both sides black, and the other bright red.

There were no spy or inspection holes in the door, but through the wall, alongside the door, was a loop-hole, similar to those usually seen in old castles for arrow-slits, and in fortified outworks for musketry firing. This slit was about 2 feet 6 inches long, and at the passage side 3 inches wide, extending through the thick brick wall in a radiating manner, till it formed an aperture 2 feet 6 inches wide. Anyone walking along the corridor could see at once the inmate of the cell and what he was doing, and had a full view of him both when at work and in bed.

Table or stool there were none. The bucket, with its lid, performed several offices. It contained the water I washed in, and which I could change twice a day. It formed my seat when at work, and my table when I sat on the bed-place, or platform, and had my meals. It always stood near the centre of the cell floor, immediately opposite the inspection aperture. By standing on tip-toe I could look out of my window, and command a good view of the Pentagon and yards. This window, which was protected by strong iron bars outside, I could open and shut at pleasure, one-half of it falling inwards on a hinge.

I had not been very long left to myself before I heard the iron gate at my cell rattle and open, and then the door. A fine, tall, soldierly-looking, fair man walked in, and on first entering reminded me strongly of the Duke of Cambridge. In a racy Irish brogue he asked me if I was No. 20,001. This was the first time I had been addressed by my numerical name, and it sounded somewhat harshly to my ears.

'Now, me man, see you have all the kit ye are intittled to,' said he, looking round at all my household goods. 'Bring that bucket and get some clane water.'

I did so, taking the bucket to the sink and tap at the landing, on top of the stairs in the round tower.

'Now bring them dirty sheets, and ye shall have clane ones.'

I followed him, with the sheets of the last resident, to a cell at the centre of the ward, which he had fitted up as a store-room for the necessaries required by the men under his charge, and their work. Here he gave me clean sheets, a clean towel, with a piece of soap, a small horn-comb, and a little brush, like a nail-brush, which he said was for my hair. The soap, he told me, was my allowance for a fortnight, and that every alternate Saturday I should have a similar piece. He also gave me a small bag, containing some rags and bath brick, with which to keep my tin and pewter things bright and clean. This he told me to hang behind the door. He then came to my cell and showed me where everything was to be placed when not in use, and how to roll up my bedding and fold up the blankets and sheets. He also explained the use of the mysterious red and black wand. When I wished to speak to a warder for any purpose, I was to put out the red end from the inspection aperture, to cause him to come to me. If a man wishes to see the governor, the doctor, or the chaplain, he is to 'sport his broom,' lay his little hair-broom on the floor at the door directly the cell is opened in the morning. This is a signal for the warder to come to him and take down his requirements on a slate on which he makes up his morning's report.

As I had passed and repassed along the passage I had naturally cast a curious eye into the other cells, and through the inspection holes I had seen that all were working at tailoring, so I concluded, and rightly, that I was to be a tailor. This rather encouraged me, as it was clean, and not the hard, laborious work which I had dreaded might be my lot.

At six o'clock supper was served. I presented my pint pot at the gate of my cell, and it was filled by an assistant warder from a large can, carried by one of the prisoners, of very good thick gruel, sweetened with treacle. My other pint pot I had full of water. Water was served out several times during the day.

Soon after supper I heard the work being collected from the different cells, and at nine o'clock a bell rang, which, I was told by the warder then on duty, was the signal that I might take down my bed, but need not go to it till a quarter to ten, when I should hear another bell, and all lights would be put out.

As soon as it was dusk a small lamp had been handed in to me with which to light my gas. My first evening was very

lonely; I had no books of any sort, but I did the best I could to while away the time, standing on my bucket and looking through the open window in the cool evening air, gazing at the flitting clouds and listening to the quarter chimes of Big Ben on the Tower of the Westminster Palace. All the cells being lighted, the rows of windows, in four tiers, round the Pentagon yards looked pretty. I tried to forget it was a prison, but to think it was a barrack, to which it is not unlike.

I made a good study of the rules, and was glad to find that I should have the privilege of writing home within fourteen days from my arrival. This I knew would be great comfort to those at home. I could tell them I was well, and also inform them where I was, for of course no intimation is otherwise given to the friends of prisoners as to where they may be sent to; I also saw that I should be entitled to receive a reply letter any time within any one month. After that, all communication would cease for six months. During the first two years letters are allowed to pass between prisoners and their families, and also visits to take place every six months, the second year every four months, and after that every three months, provided always that a prisoner did not forfeit his privilege by misconduct, and that he earned his proper quota of marks.

The prisoners are divided into classes as follows:—

For the first year they are in the probation class, and wear their registered number printed on a drab badge on the left arm, and no facing on the jacket; for the second year in the third class, when the badge and facings are black, with the number of the man printed in red on the badge. These two classes carry no privileges with them.

At the expiration of two years, if the prisoner has earned his full complement of marks, or so soon as he has done so, he is promoted to the second class, the badge and facings for which are yellow, the printing of the number being in black. Members of this and of the first class are 'tea men;' they have the privilege—and a great one it is—of having one pint of tea every evening instead of gruel.

After three years' servitude, and earning the requisite marks, the man is promoted into the highest, or first class, the badge and facings of which are blue, with the numbers printed in black.

Whenever a man is reported for any infringement of rules or misconduct and punished, he is frequently deprived of his class and its privileges for such time as the governor or deputy may determine, besides losing marks or having bread and water for so many days. Some unruly characters pass their whole time in the probationary class. Others again never once lose their class. I never did, though I was reported three times for trivial matters, and lost marks, which I afterwards had restored to me.

When a man loses his class from the first or second, he goes into the third for the time being, and for that period he loses his privilege of having tea, and returns to gruel. This, among prisoners, is termed 'smashing the teapot,' and when a man is restored to his class, and has his tea, it is said he has 'had his teapot mended' or 'got it down the spout.'

By the colour of a man's badge and facings it is seen at once at a distance to what class he belongs. At Millbank, of course all the men are in probationary class, unless, as in my case, they stay over twelve months, but I did not mount a black badge till I got to Dartmoor. At Dartmoor and the other prisons the prisoners are all warded according to their classes, and also according to religions, Protestant or Catholic. This latter distinction of warding off the prisoners is followed at Millbank; of blue dress men and red collarmen I will speak when we meet with them at Dartmoor, also of the black particoloured and yellow and black dressed men.

At six o'clock the next morning the loud bell of the prison awoke everyone and all the surrounding neighbourhood of Westminster and Pimlico too, I should think. Out of bed, and have a good wash all over if you like—I did—and by the time it was done the warders arrived and threw open the cell doors. Scrubbing brushes and cloths were served out to each cell, and, with the water he has washed in, the prisoner cleans the floor of his apartment. Then each in turn, as he is called by the warder, every man brings out his bucket and pewter to the sink to empty and replenish with clean water. Beds must be rolled up and stowed, everything in its place, and the man dressed by seven o'clock, when the bell goes for chapel.

Each ward is marched off to chapel in its turn, and on receiving a signal that the way is clear of other prisoners, along the corridors we marched in silence. Such is the rule, though there

were many whisperings together among some of the men, which was always checked by the warders. There was, however, no such nonsense as holding the hands behind the back, as at Newgate.

On arriving at the chapel a principal warder indicated the seats to be filled up. When seated I had time to look around. It was a large octagonal building with a gallery running all round, and capable of holding the many hundred men, or at any rate the Protestant portion of them, that the prison contained. My ward was in the centre of the ground floor, and I had a good view all round, though several admonitious to 'Look to your front' warned me not to be too curious on my first visit. There was a neat communion table and railing, with the Tables of the Law customary in churches before the new ritualistic fashions discarded these time-honoured emblems of our Protestant faith to make room for reredos, pictures, crosses, candlesticks, and flowers. Over the communion table in the gallery was the organ, which was very well played by the head schoolmaster of the prison. In front of the table were the reading-desk and pulpit. To the left of the organ, in the front of the gallery, were the governor's and deputy-governor's pews. The chief warders on duty and the principals had their respective places, and on elevated seats all round the walls, and at intervals in the body of the church, were warders and assistant warders in ample numbers.

I was much surprised at the good singing of the prisoners, but my surprise was lessened when, after the service, the chaplain and the governor having retired, the organist pulled aside the curtain, and turning to the men gave out a hymn and practised them in singing it, and several of the chants and other portions of the service; instructing and reproving, or encouraging, and going over and over again with each piece till it went to his satisfaction.

By the time we were all in our cells it was breakfast time. A certain number of men from each ward are told off to bring up the cocoa cans and the baskets of bread, and the breakfast is soon served out.

Those men who have their work in their cells lose no time in proceeding with it, and on the return of the warders from their own breakfast, the tools—scissors, sleeve-boards, irons, or 'geese'—are served out, together with such supplies of thread, buttons, and fresh work as the men require. The clothing made at Millbank is

for prisoners at that and other stations, comprising the knicker-bocker suits, shirts, flannels, stockings, and boots and shoes. A great deal of weaving is done at Millbank of coarse goods, afterwards used for prison shirts, towels, pocket-handkerchiefs, &c. Mats of all sorts and sizes, and cocoa-nut coir matting is woven to a considerable extent. Mat-making is the hardest work done at Millbank. There are carpenters' and blacksmiths' shops, to which are drafted such artisans as may be among the prisoners. All work for alterations or repairs—painting, whitewashing, &c.—is done by the prisoners.

The washing of the prisoners' under-clothes is done by the women, but not, I believe, at Millbank. I understood it was all sent to Wandsworth.

The bakery and kitchens are all worked by convicts under the superintendence of special warders. Certain numbers of the warders and assistants are 'tradesmen,' who are capable of superintending and instructing those men who are placed in their respective gangs or wards to learn or work at a trade.

So soon as all the others in the ward were set to work, the Irish warder, or 'Paddy,' as he was called by his flock, came in to me, accompanied by a prisoner, bringing materials to set me to work. A bundle of drab coarse cloth was thrown down.

'Now you must make that jacket.'

'But, Sir, I know nothing of tailoring.'

'Och, we'll soon make a tailor of you,' said he. 'Look ye here, now, undo that bundle;' and as he spoke, I obeyed, and all the various pieces, ready cut out for a similar jacket in shape to the one I wore, fell upon the floor.

'Now,' said Paddy, turning to his man beside him, 'give him a needle and thimble, and a hanck of thread, and we'll see what he can do.'

I was fitted with a thimble, had thread, a piece of beeswax, one needle, and a pair of scissors supplied to me.

'I'll be bound I'll make a tailor of ye in a week. Try your hand on that. If ye do it wrong, ye can just undo it and do it again. I shall give an eye to ye, and see how ye get on. Maybe I'll give ye a bit of a help to show ye.'

'Thank you, Sir,' I replied. 'I am afraid I shall not make much of a hand at first, but I will do my best.'

'That's it—yer best. The greatest man alive can't do more than his best. Och, we'll make a mighty fine tailor of ye now before ye leave us. He turned away, closing the door after him.

I saw at once that 'Paddy' was a character, and so I found him. He took great pride with his ward and the men in it. 'His boys' he called us. He was very particular, and if a man did not behave properly, or gave him any trouble, and did not suit his views, he managed very soon to get him removed to some other ward; and I have known him several times refuse to take a man he did not like, or knew to be a troublesome character, into his ward. 'Just you take that fellow out of this—there's no room here for him,' he would say to the warder bringing up a new hand he did not like the look of. 'Ye'll plase to tell the chief I haven't a cell that'll suit him, and will he send him somewhere else.'

Paddy was a somewhat privileged warder. He had been many years in the service, and had been a principal; but a little failing weakness for his national spirit had caused him to be reduced. When at Dartmoor, I heard from a prisoner from Millbank he had again been promoted. He undoubtedly was a good officer, and his superiors were well aware of it, and humoured his little peculiarities. It was considered quite a good thing to get into his ward, and when I came to see a little of what other wards were, which I had good opportunities of doing when Paddy was off duty or away, and we had a strange man over us, I congratulated myself on my good fortune in being warded off to his care in C 2, Pentagon 3. The reader may have noticed my special civilities in addressing him as 'Sir;' but that was a rule in the service, that whenever a prisoner addressed an official, or 'officer,' as they liked to be called, he was to use the word 'Sir,'

After a while Paddy came and gave me a little instruction, and he looked in frequently, to show me how to proceed with my work. After, I forget how many days, the jacket was completed, all except the button-holes, which my instructor considerately thought were as yet beyond my abilities. I should be very sorry to say the jacket was turned out in a workmanlike manner, but I assure you I was not a little proud of my work when I held it up complete. In the course of time I became a very fair 'botcher,' as those who knew nothing of tailoring before they came to prison were called.

About ten o'clock every morning one or other of the chief

warders, sometimes two together, would come round. On their entering the corridor either the warder or his assistant would run on before them and unbolt every door, flinging it wide open. Slowly did the officials pass along, carefully scrutinising every cell, and if any man's bedding or other things were out of order, he speedily heard of it unpleasantly.

The head chief warder was very popular among the men, as he never lost an opportunity of bullying the warders and assistant warders. He was a very big man, and had a most stentorian voice. We could generally hear him shouting in some other ward before he came to ours, so that all hands were pretty well prepared to receive him. He would sometimes, however, come quietly round when least expected, and if he did catch any unfortunate under warder away from his post or a little remiss, the way he would go on was a caution. I did not think him wise in so doing, as I did not consider it prudent to give his subalterns their wigging in the presence or hearing of the prisoners. No doubt many of the young hands were conceited enough in finding themselves entrusted with so much authority over other men, many of whom were much better educated than themselves, and at one time had filled respectable positions in life. Several of these warders delighted in bullying the prisoners under their charge, but I question whether reproving them before the men they were put over, was the best way to correct them. I remember once he came quietly into the ward, into which he let himself softly with his pass key, for I fancy he had a suspicion of what he would find, and just dropped upon a very tyrannical young fellow, who was superintending the middle day changing the water, and bullying every man as he came out of his cell with his bucket. No one pleased him, he had a growl and a bad word for everyone. The big chief came softly up the other corridor of the ward to which the assistant warder was standing, and consequently, though he could hear every word the man uttered, and we could see him as he passed our cells, the bullying assistant had no suspicion that anyone was coming. Unfortunately the man was not exactly in the spot he should have been, at the angle near the tower, and from whence, by turning his head a little, either to the right or left, he could command a full view of both corridors.

'Who is the officer in charge of the ward?' was shouted in a

voice that would have made the late Mr. Cartlitch, of Astley's, quite fearful for his reputation. 'Ah, it's you, Sir, is it? And don't you know your duty better than to be wandering about there? This is your place, Sir. This! this! where I am—here. Come at once, Sir, and take your proper position. If you have not had time to learn your duties, I'll put you on double hours that you may have. If I cannot have warders who know their duty, they are no use to me. You seem to think you are here for nothing else but to bully the men. First do your own duty, Sir, as an officer should, before you let me hear you finding fault. How many cells have you open at once?—Four. Yes, just three too many. If you were to open them one at a time, and exercise your legs, you lazy fellow, it would be better.' All this was liberally garnished with very unparliamentary expletives.

Of course, every man in the ward heard all he said, and many of them laughed as soon as they heard him go. Some would ask the poor crestfallen fellow how he liked it, and altogether the discipline of the ward was not improved.

While I was deep in the mysteries of trying to fit the different pieces of the jacket together, and comparing them with my own, which I had taken off, I was visited by an assistant schoolmaster, who brought me a Bible, Prayer and Hymn-Books, also a volume of the 'Leisure Hour.' He made me write a few verses of a Psalm on my slate, to see my handwriting, and, finding I did not require any of his instruction, told me I need not attend school, but, during the hour each week when other members of the ward were at their lessons, I should be at liberty to read or write, and need not continue at my work. He also asked if I wished to write to any friends at the next school day, or defer it. If I did not exercise the privilege within a month I should lose it. I need hardly say I booked myself to write the very first opportunity.

One day each week the schoolmasters came into our ward for one hour to give instruction to all those who were deficient. Every cell door and gate in the yard was thrown open, and work was knocked off. When the day arrived that I was to write home, I was directed to go to the end of the ward, where I found a number of small tables, one of which, with an inkstand, a pen, and piece of blotting-paper, I took into my cell. A sheet of regulation paper was brought to me, on which was already written my name and

official number, also the date. A few lines of printing gave me directions as to certain rules I was not to infringe. I was to confine my writing to the ruled lines—not to write between them or to cross my letter; was not to give any information respecting any other prisoner, or any prison news; was not to write to any improper person, or to use any improper language.

Every letter to or from a prisoner is examined by the deputy-governor, who initials it and passes it on to the chaplain. He also reads and initials it. Each strikes out anything he considers as infringing the rules, or as improper either for a prisoner to know or communicate. There was a notice on the back of the letter intimating to the friends of prisoners that they were to confine their communications to domestic and personal matters, and not to say anything about the general news of the day. Anything of this sort would be struck out or the letter returned to the sender.

Knowing my letters were to be subject to both an official and clerical examination, I was as careful as possible as to what I did say, and I do not think there was ever one word erased from any letter I ever wrote, and as I drew my friends' special attention to the rules, they too conformed to them, and my letters all passed the censorship without any remarks. If in moderation, a man's wife need not confine herself to one sheet or two, and other members of his family were permitted to contribute to the same letter. Nothing was allowed to be sent to any prisoner, not even the photograph of a wife or child. This I cannot but think a mistake; anything that tends to soften and humanise a man's heart can do him no harm—far otherwise. The sight now and then of the face of a loved one, I am sure, would have kept more than one man I came in contact with from breaking the prison rules.

At the close of the school hour the library books are changed, and a man can go and see what books there are, a number being brought into the ward, and take what he likes. One of the rules states that prisoners are not to exchange books with one another, but this was one of the few rules that I systematically infringed. I think I read every book in the ward worth perusing. I valued highly this privilege of reading, and it was to me my greatest help and comfort throughout the whole time of my servitude. At Dartmoor the library is even better than at Millbank; in fact, was an excellent one. I consider this the one merciful indulgence

allowed to the convict. Of course, there are many men who do not care for reading, but to very many others it is an inestimable blessing.

Sometimes a Scripture reader, a very agreeable and well-informed man, paid me a visit, and although, as I could read for myself, he did not read to me, his conversation on various topics was always welcome, and I was glad whenever his cheerful face appeared at my door.

Once only, during nearly thirteen months that I was at Millbank, did I have a visit from the chaplain, and that did not last three minutes. The governor would come round about once a month, and the deputy-governor every week, when the cell doors were all thrown open as on the chief warder's inspection. A prisoner could see the governor any day by giving notice in the morning. I never had occasion to see the governor of Millbank, and consequently was never in his office.

The doctor occasionally had examinations of the men, when each man had to strip in the doctor's office in the infirmary. Men were weighed also, and their weights registered. By this means it was seen pretty well the state of a man's health. Some of these examinations had reference to the drafting away men to the hard labour stations.

Some men were for everlasting troubling the doctor. I never did but once. I had a bad tooth: it ached, and I could not stand it, so sported my broom for the doctor. A little before twelve I was called and marched over to the infirmary. I know not why it is, but both at Millbank and Dartmoor the warders stationed at the infirmaries are about the greatest brutes in the place. One would naturally suppose a man would be selected for such a station with some little store of the milk of human kindness in him. *Au contraire*, they choose men utterly devoid of anything of the kind.

On arriving at the infirmary I waited on the stairs in great pain for some time, till my turn came, for there were many men up for the doctor.

At last it came, and in I went.

'What's the matter?' said an assistant doctor.

'Have a bad tooth, Sir, and will thank you to take it out.'

'Which is it? Ah! an upper. Stand there.'

Stand I did. A couple of wrenches, and out it was. My

mouth, of course, was full of blood, and I naturally looked round for some place to spit into. At the moment the assistant was called away by the doctor into another room.

'Now then,' savagely said the warder, 'what are you looking for? Right-about face—march!'

I dare not spit on the floor. As I reached the top of the stairs I heard the assistant, who had more feeling than the warder, call out, 'Let that man wash his mouth out;' but the brute either would not or did not hear, and not till I reached the gravelled yard could I spit out the blood, and I had to wait till I reached my own ward before I could wash my mouth out with cold water. I told Paddy how I had been served: 'Och! he didn't feel the pincers himself a bit; it's a pity *he* didn't. Go to the sink, my boy, and wash away.'

I have said that Paddy took a pride in his ward, and I believe every man appreciated it, and did his best to keep the old man in good humour.

He was, in fact, a favourite with us all, for he did his best to make our time with him as passable as it was possible. He was always kind to the men under his charge, and I do not remember his kindness being once abused. He managed to get together about the quietest and best behaved men in the prison into his ward. Not so other wards: rows of all sorts, and consequently reports and punishments, were continually going on. On our way to chapel of a morning, in going through the other wards, we passed the dark cells, and I never knew them to be once untenanted. There was a little man in the ward adjoining us, on the same corridor, who was always in hot water, and giving infinite trouble. Whenever he had a chance he would steal bread and soup out of another man's cell. Frequently he would tear up his bed clothes and his own clothes, and when the warder would open his cell in the morning, would find him as naked as Adam, seated amidst a heap of rags and tatters. Books he tore into shreds and threw out of his window. He was always in punishment. One night a new idea struck him. He was tired of merely tearing up his things: he thought he would burn them, so very shortly after he had got his gas alight he set to work. The first intimation we had was a cry of fire, a deal of running about, and most unearthly shrieks from the foolish fellow, who did not calculate that

a straw bed, once in a blaze, was just enough to roast him. We all looked out of our windows and saw the smoke streaming from his cell window. Some were alarmed, and set to shrieking as well, fearing they would all be baked in their cells like birds in a pie.

On the warders opening the door of his cell, of course the sudden draught freshened the fire, and they were driven back directly. One, with more gumption than the others, dropped on to his hands and knees, and crawled in. Not far from the door he found the stupid fellow lying on the floor insensible, and dragged him into the corridor. The door was closed, and the burning straw soon burned itself out, without any other damage than blackening the walls and ceiling, and half-suffocating the troublesome prisoner. On being brought into the fresh air he soon recovered, and was marched off to a punishment cell there and then. This same man got into trouble when he was drafted off to go with a gang of prisoners to Dartmoor, through trying to secrete some pins and needles about his person in a most extraordinary manner.

Every day for one hour we were marched down into the yards for exercise, and some of the able-bodied men were set to work to pump supplies of water into the large cisterns at the top of each of the fifteen round towers of the prison. Others were set to sweep and roll the gravel of the exercise grounds, and sometimes all the stonework in which the iron railings dividing the area of the pentagon into different yards were set, would be holystoned and cleaned by the prisoners.

In the centre of each pentagon was a round building, the lower storey of which formed a guard room, with a sleeping room on the upper storey, in which those officers on duty for the night, and also several of the single assistant warders, slept. These buildings were round, with windows looking in every direction, so that the officers had full cognisance of everything going on. Each pentagon was under the superintendence of two principal warders, one of whom was always on duty. Every ward had its own special warder and his assistant. Each pentagon had its own kitchen, and it was the duty of the principal on duty to inspect every man's rations before they were sent up into the wards for distribution.

The food at Millbank is plain but good and well cooked, and,

considering the little exercise the men have, not insufficient. Of course men grumble at it, but I am sure many are far better fed in prison than they are out. I had no means of judging if the kitchen departments were clean, never having been in them at Millbank, but I never saw any reason to think they were not. The soup was really most excellent, evidently made from heads and shins of beef, well stewed, and thickened with pearl barley and vegetables. The Millbank soup was superior to that of Dartmoor, though that was very fair.. The beef and mutton were good and well cooked, but the beef was generally all lean, and the mutton all fat, and as a prisoner was not allowed to keep the food from one day to another this was awkward, as otherwise he might keep the fat mutton to go with the lean beef. With the meat was half-a-pint of the liquor it was boiled in, flavoured with onions or leeks. This was quite as good as the Newgate soup, which was served without meat.

The variety of vegetables, or of substitutes for them at such times as between the seasons of old and new potatoes, quite surprised me, and did great credit to the caterer. Cabbages, parsnips, carrots, were frequently served out, also rice, peas pudding, haricot beans, and preserved potatoes. I was much surprised to find celery in the soup, but found that large quantities of celery were grown in the prison gardens and sent to market, and the outside stalks and leaves trimmed off were utilised in the prisoners' soup.

Occasionally salt pork was served out, and formed a change. When it was, there was always a much larger allowance given to each man. On Thursdays no meat or soup, but a great square block of suet pudding weighing 1lb., and the usual allowance of potatoes. On Sundays cheese only composed our dinner, but the loaf served in the morning was considerably larger than on weekdays.

Before dinner is served, each man is supplied through his inspection hole with a tin knife with which to cut his meat, and this he has to give up again after dinner. This was one of the things I did not like at all, as many of the knives were very far from being clean or desirable-looking articles. I always had my brickdust trays ready to clean mine directly it was shot through the hole. At Dartmoor every man had his own knife in his cell, and kept it as bright as silver and as sharp as a

razor. Some men amused themselves with scratching, not only their names, but a short history of their case and supposed grievances on the tin knives. Some, again, chose this method to give vent to expletives and anathemas against the prison authorities, that they did not dare to speak. I need hardly say that these latter did not bear either signature or official numbers.

The dinners were served in oblong-shaped tins, divided in the centre into two distinct compartments, with a lid to each. The division in the centre came up so as to form a convenient handle. Both lids being closed down, the dinners were kept pretty hot, and there was no chance of any picking or choosing, or unfair favouritism in serving them out. I am sorry to say that as a rule these tins were disgracefully dirty, and reflected no credit on the officers who had charge of the gangs supposed to be employed in cleaning them. Complaints were frequently made by prisoners to the governor, and for a time a little more care in rinsing them out would be taken, but except when first new they were never really clean. The authorities were most particular that every man's pewter utensil should be as bright as silver, but the can that his dinner was served to him in was filthy half the time.

One hour was allowed for dinner: a bell rung at twelve, and frequently in our ward we all had our dinners served out before the bell went. At one o'clock the bell went again, and then every man resumed his work. During that hour a man's time was his own, and I used to hurry over my dinner that I might have as long as possible to enjoy my reading. This was my great solace, and without it I fear I should have gone mad, for being so much by myself, my fearful position and fallen estate, and the ruin it had brought on those so dear to me, would rise up before me in condemnation. I believe that if the authorities were to take away the books a very large proportion of the convicts, and particularly the better class, those who have lost a good position, would become insane. A man's whole life passes like a panorama before him. This mistake and that failure—the error in judgment in this case and miscalculation in that—all come up and are plainly seen now it is too late. Lost or misapplied opportunities rise in judgment against the man as he sits in his horrid convict dress over his solitary work in prison. Where else can he fly but to books, and specially to the Book of Books, God's own word? I

read a great deal of the Bible while in prison, and obtained a greater and deeper knowledge of it than ever I did before. Each prisoner is allowed to have a certain number of what they call school books in his cell, besides the library book. The Scripture reader brought me 'Nicholls' Help to Reading the Bible,' and I would recommend everyone to obtain it, old or young. It assisted me wonderfully.

Directly the warders return from dinner the cans and tin knives are collected, and work proceeds. Once every week during the exercise hour the men go to the bath—once a fortnight for a wash all over, and the alternate week feet washing only. About every ten days or so a man's hair and beard are clipped down.

Saturday was always a busy day with our warder, Paddy. Just before dinner is served each man has a bundle of clean clothes handed to him—shirt, stockings, towel, and pocket-handkerchief, and, every alternate Saturday, flannel drawers and vest. These he has to put on during his dinner hour, and after dinner the dirty things are collected. On Saturdays were served out the allowances of salt, bath brick, cleaning-rags, and paper, and, every alternate Saturday, soap. On Saturdays, too, any repairs to clothes were attended to. Why or wherefore I know not, but we were forbidden to mend our own clothes. Paddy would come round and ask through the inspection hole, '20,001, is yer breeches broke?' If they were he would give you another pair to wear, and your own had a little leather label or tally tied to them, with the number of the ward, and a tin tally with the prisoner's number, and the next Saturday the 'broken breeches' would come back duly repaired. In one of the wards the men did nothing else but these repairs.

Sunday was a very quiet day, though we had to go to church twice and had exercise in the afternoon. The morning bell for getting up did not go till seven, and of course there was no work. The warders came out in full dress, and those who had served in the army or navy sported their medals, and made a brave appearance at the church.

The things that wore out most with me were shoes. We all had low shoes, and what with the stone passages, the gravel of the exercise yards, and, I expect, the bad quality of the leather, the soles seemed to last no time. Whenever we went to the bath-room, in one corner were a heap of mended shoes, and, first of all

asking permission, a man could select a pair if he could get them to fit him, and cast his old ones on one side, to be in their turn repaired.

During the winter, although the prison is very fairly heated, I suffered considerably from cold. Directly after the return of the officers from breakfast, any number of sticks, black end out, were thrust from the holes in the wall. Every man had work that needed pressing, and I can assure the reader a good hot tailor's goose is no bad thing to place in the middle of a small cell to get a little extra warmth from. It was wonderful how much more pressing our work needed in cold weather than hot. On a cold day a hot goose is as great a comfort as it is a nuisance on a hot one.

In the earlier part of my narrative I stated that the quantity of bread was more than I required. To give any article of food to another prisoner is a grievous sin in the eyes of prison authorities, but there was nothing in the rules against feeding the sparrows outside, so I had quite a muster of the saucy little fellows every day on the deep sill of my window. My cell was next to the space occupied by the flues of the heating apparatus that warmed and ventilated the whole four floors of C building in our pentagon. The space was exactly the same size as a cell, and, indeed, the four cells from the bottom corridor, where the fires were, to our top corridor, were all devoted to this purpose. Not only did it make my cell warmer than many of the others, but, as for some purpose the glass was taken out of the window-frames, it formed a most convenient and comfortable place for the sparrows to build their nests in. No creature in this world is more wide awake than a London sparrow, and so advantageous a position for nidification and incubation did not go unappreciated. It was simply crowded with them, and a fine chattering noise they made in the early spring time. Their chirruping invariably woke me before the prison bell. My crumbs were looked for by them regularly, and as I did not eat much more than half my allowance of bread, I was enabled to feed plenty of them. They were not at all shy, and would come close up to the glass. At times one more impudent than another would jump up on to the cross bar of the iron grating at the window, and chirp to tell me to make haste over my own breakfast and give him and his mates theirs. These birds afforded me much amusement.

When the summer came round, with it came the season for white-washing, and the prison was done throughout. All the prisoners had a turn at this work. It was not hard work, but very unpleasant, and as the wash was made with lime, the splashes burned the skin very badly, if we were not careful. It was in going about with a white-wash gang that I obtained a good deal of information about the prison, and particularly of its design and plan. We were engaged at this work altogether for a week, when others took our places, and we returned to our 'botching tailoring.' Three days we worked in our own pentagon and in the infirmary, and three days in the women's wards. We saw nothing of the women, as, before we went in, the ward to be whitened was cleared out.

English people have a strange and irresistible habit of writing their names and all manner of things on the walls wherever they may be. It is a thing I hold in abhorrence, and never am guilty of it. To see every public building and place scribbled over with the names and addresses of Brown, Jones, and Robinson always irritates me and lessens my enjoyment of very many places. I should not be surprised but that in the top storey of the porcelain tower of Nankin will be found the name and address of John or William Smith. As it is in the outer world so it is in prison, and many were the curious histories scrawled upon the cell walls of Millbank Prison. The men generally were satisfied with a simple statement of a fact, as—'Tohomas Hopkins came here from the Steel, 1st April, 1854, 7 years for slinging my hook;' then in some cases would follow the reverse of a prayer for the future well-being of the convicting judge. 'Slinging his hook' is the professional term for picking pockets.

A good deal of very improper language adorned, or rather disfigured, the walls of the men's cells, and here and there much that was blasphemous and profane; but strange to say, it was the women that inscribed obscenity and indecency, in some instances illustrated artistically, on their walls. I know that when a woman is bad she is very bad, but I thought a certain amount of modesty lay dormant in the most abandoned. Since I have seen what some of the female prisoners scratched upon their cell walls I know otherwise. An old friend of mine used to say there are three sexes—men, women, and beasts; several of the latter were im-

prisoned in Millbank. What most surprises me is that such inscriptions and drawings were allowed to remain on the walls one week. Who inspects these cells? Are the female warders blind, or are they as bad as the women who scribble these things?

The day I worked in the infirmary made me feel very sad. To see a man stretched upon a bed of sickness is a sorry sight at any time, but when that bed is in a prison cell, with an iron gate at its entrance, securely locked, and a very possible chance that the same may be—indeed, in all probability will be—your own fate, makes a man's heart quake and his courage sink to zero. Mine did for a moment when first I walked past those infirmary cells and saw the pining, sickly faces through those fearful bars. On no day I think, during the whole of my four years of imprisonment, did my heart droop so low as on that day. I could not but think that night the same might be my own case, and how soon? I have suffered illness in my time, even to death's door, but I have had tender nursing, have been surrounded by dear ones who anticipated every want or wish—but to be ill in a convict prison, with not one kind or sympathising face to smile upon you, to be coarsely and rudely tended by some fellow-prisoner, whose sole object in endeavouring to be made 'hospital orderly' is for the purpose of feasting himself on the few little dainties ordered by the doctor, of which he robs the wretched invalid when a warder's back is turned! Such a prospect made me shudder, and I prayed to God to spare me that trouble: those at home prayed, and prayed earnestly, that I might live to return home again, and find the dear flock unscathed, and miss no dear little face to mar the joy of meeting. God in his mercy heard our prayers, and both I and mine were spared sickness throughout the whole time. To be ill whilst a convict is sad, to die a convict is terrible. To die at sea and be cast into the waves, rolled up in a hammock, with a shot at the feet to carry the poor soulless body to the lowest depths below, to some seems a sad and piteous fate. To be shot down or mangled by a bursting shell amid the battle's roar yields at least the satisfaction that a man dies doing his duty and falls in his country's cause; but to die a convict, to be buried in an unknown, uncared-for grave, thrust into a prison coffin filled up with dirty sawdust, as I have seen them done at Dartmoor, so that the ragged old shirt given out to do duty for a shroud may be saved

for other purposes, is but a sorry end for a man who has once lived respected and beloved.

Every precaution is taken that no man shall make his escape, and the first care naturally is that he should never be possessed of any tool or instrument of any kind that is at all likely to aid him in making the attempt. This is guarded against by constant vigilance, and frequent search is made both of prisoners' cells and of their persons. I remember well the first time my chamber was 'turned over,' as it is called. Always while the men are bathing, the officer examines their clothing. One day, on going in after exercise, I was surprised, on passing the doors of several cells, to see everything in confusion, and on reaching my own I found some one had been there kicking up 'Meg's diversion'—books were thrown in one corner, bedding unrolled and cast about in every direction, not an article but had been misplaced and thoroughly examined; even the little bag with the bath brick and rags was turned inside out and its contents strewed all over the place. This took place some three times during my stay there.

Sometimes a personal 'turn over' would be made. Two officers enter a man's cell; one stands before and the other behind the prisoner, who strips off every rag he wears. The one in front thoroughly examines each article, and throws them one by one on the ground at his feet. The warder behind narrowly watches that the prisoner does not 'palm' anything—in other words, practise some legerdemain trick to conceal any contraband article he might have upon him. Such a thing as a rusty nail being found on a man or in his cell would get him into serious trouble, and be construed into preparation for an attempt to escape. Once a man brought up from the yard a good-sized stone, as big as an orange. Why or wherefore, except for the reason the authorities gave him credit for, I cannot tell. He was suspected, if not actually accused, of intending to use it as a weapon to attack one of the warders with, and was severely punished, besides being fined a serious number of marks.

The principal 'contraband' article that gets men into trouble in prisons is 'tobacco.' 'How is it possible,' the reader asks, 'for a man locked up and taken such care of to get tobacco? He could as easily get the Crown jewels.' Nevertheless, tobacco is being frequently found. The question is, Where does it come

from? Who brings it into the prison? While I was at Dartmoor nearly a pound of tobacco was found secreted in one man's cell. It cannot come by itself. There is only one way for it to come: it is brought in by the officers. With some exceptions, the warders are as bad a lot of men as can be found, and many of them are, if anything, worse than the prisoners. The 'pals' or friends of a man in trouble soon find out where he is, and set about 'working the oracle' with some warder to 'sling him some bacca.' These men arrange with a warder, whom they have 'squared,' to give their 'pal in grief' so many ounces of 'bacca.' They have a free-masonry sign by which they can get such a receipt from the man to the warder as will satisfy them he has duly performed his contract. As much as a sovereign for every ounce so delivered will they sometimes pay, and as it only costs the warder two or three pence, his profit is pretty good. The prisoners who get supplies this way seldom or ever 'round' on the 'screw,' *anglicè* betray an officer, so long as he acts 'square' with them and their 'pals' outside. This tobacco is chewed, as no prisoner has the remotest chance of smoking without instant discovery.

Now and again a warder does get 'bowled out,' and comes to grief. At the very least he loses his situation. There are several ways in which this occurs. What I am now saying relates as much to Dartmoor as to Millbank, and indeed more so. A prisoner gets tobacco; he either in a generous moment gives a piece to a fellow-prisoner or a 'mate' smells it, and discovers what he has got. The secret once so far divulged, his 'mate' soon finds out who the 'blooming screw' is that 'slung the smash,' *i.e.* brought in the tobacco. All goes smoothly till either the two 'mates' 'split,' or the 'blooming bloke,' the obliging officer, falls foul of the possessor of the secret, not dreaming the man knows anything about his having supplied the tobacco. The prisoner, burning for revenge, quietly bides his time till the chief warder comes round, then asks to speak to him, and 'blows the gaff.' Probably no notice is taken at the time, but that warder is 'spotted' by the chief warder, spies perhaps even 'planted,' and the whole thing soon comes out. In some instances officers have been prosecuted and imprisoned. Men will run any risk and do anything to get ever so little of the much-coveted 'weed,' or even the very remotest flavour of it. I have known a man pick up a

piece of a dirty old castaway broken clay pipe. It was a treasure —broken into small pieces, sometimes ground up—sucked, or chewed, and relished like the finest honeydew. A prisoner will give his dinner in exchange for a piece of such an old pipe.

With regard to stopping prisoners having tobacco, running the risks, and getting into the scrapes and punishments they do, there is only one effectual way to do it. No officer, while on duty, or even within the prison precincts, should be allowed to have any tobacco in his possession, even for his own use. A warder brings in tobacco for a prisoner. Unless detected in the actual fact of giving it to him, how can it be proved it is not for his own consumption? If the authorities will forbid any tobacco entering the prison walls, or any officer using it within the limits of the establishment, then and not till then can this subject be properly and effectually dealt with. If a rule of this sort is made, and officers are searched when entering on their duties, and most severe penalties made for breaking the rules, the supply of tobacco will instantly cease, and there will be no more trouble about it. It is most unjust and unfair to punish prisoners for the possession of an article that the authorities must know perfectly well can only be brought within their reach by their own officers, the very men whose duty it is first to prevent their getting it, and then to punish them for having it. It is simple cruelty. There is no doubt that there are many of the officials of the convict prisons who are what the Yankees call 'bad eggs.' The authorities know it, and constant changes are taking place.

Old soldiers make the best officers. The life suits them, and they are used to a somewhat similar discipline. My only wonder is that any man who can earn a crust outside, by any other means, ever enters such a service. Many try it, and after a few months leave it in disgust. Their life is but very little better than the prisoners'. I can well understand a man continuing in the police force; the life is active, the man has plenty of change, and he is generally respected. A convict warder is a man continually in a tiger's cage. With few exceptions, the men he is placed over are great scoundrels, with but few redeeming qualities, who hate the warders placed over them, regarding every one of the prison authorities as their natural enemies.

A warder comes on duty at six in the morning, and, with the

exception of meal-times, is with the prisoners till nine at night. Every alternate Sunday he is off duty. How much better is this than the life of the prisoners themselves? I have said they are a bad lot—the majority of them. I shall, when we get to Dartmoor, tell of a few of their 'little games.' I will now give an instance of a case where an officer, not acting 'square' with a prisoner, got 'planted' and 'sucked in' 'to rights.' The result was, he got his full deserts.

A certain prisoner, who was what is termed a very 'fly' man, *i.e.* a clever, scheming fellow, and who had 'pals' outside flush of money, having noticed a particular officer, and 'spotted' him as being one likely to 'do business,' sounded him as to getting tobacco and other matters. The warder, nothing loth to make money, 'tumbled,' *i.e.* entered into an arrangement with him to write to certain friends of the prisoner's, and get money for this purpose. The bargain was that in the first place the warder was to have 10*s.* out of every 20*s.* for himself, and then charge certain exorbitant prices for tobacco and other things he was to bring to the man, in small daily quantities, so as to obviate any danger of a 'stock' ever being found either in his cell or on his person, in case of a 'turn over.' All went well for the best part of a year. Then the supplies seemed to fail—at least so the officer told the man—and, after drooping and drooping, they stopped altogether. At last another prisoner, a pal of this man's, whose time was out, and who was about to get his discharge, arranged that when he reached London he would look up the man's friends, and ascertain what was the cause of the stoppage. On being discharged and going to the friends of his fellow-prisoner, the whole thing came out. Far from having stopped their supplies, they were surprised their unfortunate friend was so importunate in his demands for money. That very week a letter had come from the warder, asking for 10*l.*, saying the prisoner required money for a most special purpose of very great importance. The prisoner's friend was also a 'fly' man, and he immediately saw how he could thoroughly pay off the 'crooked' officer. Two Bank of England five-pound notes were sent, as usual, by post, and in due course received. The sender quietly waited and looked anxiously in the local papers published in the vicinity of the convict establishment where his friend was confined, till at last what he expected appeared in a paragraph

somewhat as follows:—'Serious Charge against an Officer in the Convict Prison of Startown.—A B, a warder at Startown, and C D, his wife, were brought before the county magistrates, charged with uttering and being in possession of forged Bank notes. Peter Jones, a draper at Blankville, deposed that on Tuesday last the female prisoner came to his shop and purchased an alpaca dress, a polka jacket, and other articles, amounting to 2*l.* 4*s.* 10*d.*, in payment for which she presented a Bank of England 5*l.* note, and received 2*l.* 15*s.* 2*d.* in change.

'Joseph Smith, clerk of the Royal County Bank at Blankville, deposed that he had received the 5*l.* note produced from Mr. Peter Jones, together with other moneys, and placed the same to his credit. The number and date of the note were duly entered in the receiving cash-book, and also in the paying cash-book. It was, with other notes, sent to their head office in London, and on being presented at the Bank of England was pronounced a forgery.

'Thomas A. Cute, a detective employed by the Bank of England, deposed: "I was instructed to proceed from Scotland Yard to Blankville to investigate concerning the 5*l.* note produced. I went to the house of the prisoners in the Barracks outside —— convict prison, and saw the female prisoner, who admitted having paid a 5*l.* note to Mr. Jones on Tuesday last, and said she had received it from her husband. While conversing with her, the male prisoner came in to his dinner; and I immediately apprehended him and his wife and conducted them to the office of the governor of the prison. The prisoner refused to give any account of where he obtained the 5*l.* note from; and on his being searched another 5*l.* note, now produced, together with 13*s.* 10*d.*, was found upon him." Colonel Dash, the Governor of Startown Prison, deposed that neither of the notes had been paid to the prisoner as part of his pay. His pay was 21*s.* a week, and was paid regularly each month. The prisoners were remanded.' The result was, the man was convicted for passing the forged note and sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude; the wife was acquitted. Those two forged notes were purposely planted on him, and both the 'fly' men were revenged. The prisoner's friend had always previously sent him genuine notes, but seeing how the fellow was acting he sent him two 'shise' notes, which gave him a dose that 'cooked' him. I saw the man myself, serving his time at Dartmoor.

Twice I had a visit from friends while at Millbank. The ordinary visiting room is built specially for the purpose. It is a little square house in one of the pentagons, about 15 to 16 feet square, with two doors—one on each opposite side. The interior is divided into three divisions by two sets of iron bars, with close wirework affixed to one of them. The friends of a prisoner enter on one side and the convict at the other, and in the space between the two iron gratings sits a principal warder, who hears all that is said, and if needful checks the conversation if it wanders into forbidden topics. For instance, it would be quite contrary to rules and regulations for his friends to tell a prisoner there was a war going on in Turkey. It would also be quite wrong for one prisoner to send a message for another prisoner to that man's friends through his own visitors. These messages are sent, of course, but in a roundabout sort of way. A visit of only half-an-hour's duration under such circumstances is anything but cheering or pleasant. Both the good friends who came to see me are now at rest from the cares of this world. One of them, a very dear friend, I saw through those iron bars for the very last time. I never saw either wife or child of mine till I met them a free man.

One Sunday, in consequence of some cleaning or repairs that were going on in the Protestant chapel, we all went to the Roman Catholic one. The paraphernalia of the altar had been removed, and the Protestant chaplain conducted the usual Church of England service. The arrangements as to the seating of the men of the various wards were altogether different from those adopted in the Protestant chapel. Our ward was one of the first to enter, and we were seated in such a position that I saw all the men of the other wards as they marched in. I recognised several that had been in Newgate with me, and who I had lost sight of since my arrival at Millbank. I was greatly surprised at seeing a face that I instantly recognised, in spite of the sad change in dress and the total absence of beard and whiskers. It was that of my friend the victim of Warder 'Long-nosed Smith's' cruelty at Dartmoor. I know not which feeling predominated—surprise at seeing him in such a place and position, or burning shame that he should see and recognise me in similar disgrace. The last time I had met him was at his club in St. James' Street, when I spent a pleasant hour with him chatting over some of his amusing West Indian experi-

ences. Here he was, a member of a very old county family, an Oxford man, a relative of baronets and bankers, acquainted with half the best men in London, and one of the most agreeable and accomplished fellows I ever knew. He had visited nearly every capital in Europe, and spoke several foreign languages like a Russian. I never had an opportunity of speaking to him at Millbank, but at Dartmoor I came into close proximity to him; and when I now remember the dreadful and disgusting work he had the first winter there, it makes me shudder.

The Catholic chapel is a mere shed erected in one of the pentagon yards, but very conveniently and decently fitted for the purpose. That day in church, after the service was concluded and while the prisoners were going out, a fight took place between two men that caused considerable confusion. It was the first fight I had seen among any of them, and was very speedily stopped by the prisoners near to hand and before any of the warders got there. Both were marched off to 'chokee,' and I have no doubt got punished. At Dartmoor I have seen several fights.

When the summer came round again, I knew my period at Millbank was drawing to a close, and I daily got more and more anxious regarding the station I was to be drafted to. I had gathered scraps of information from several prisoners respecting several of them, but I did not take much notice of what I heard, as I had already found how little reliance is to be placed on 'prisoners' yarns.' I knew perfectly well I should not be put to hard labour, as I had already been placed on the light labour list among the 'cripples;' but I was quite aware that some stations were far worse than others. Nearly thirteen months elapsed before I was drafted off, and then it came quite suddenly, and without the slightest intimation.

One day, as the dinners were being served, Paddy said to me, '20,001, collect yir letters together. Tie up your work, and put all your flannels on.'

I guessed what that meant in a moment, and as soon as I had eaten my dinner I undressed, and put on my flannel drawers and vest, which during the summer time I only used for sleeping in. I took the few letters I had received during my stay there from their resting-place in the Bible, and quietly waited for the summons, in a state of no little anxiety. At last it came. Nearly all

our ward were told off, much to old Paddy's disgust, who really looked as if tears were very near the surface with him at parting with so many of his 'boys' at once. Several of us had been a year with him, and a mutual regard had sprung up. I knew the end of my quiet, though solitary, time was at an end. I dreaded very much the being herded and brought into daily, hourly contact with some of the ruffians and blackguards I had hitherto been able to keep at a distance. I would willingly have spent my whole time at Millbank. I did know the worst of that, but in going elsewhere I was going to 'evils I knew not of.'

Forty of us found ourselves in the same corridor I had been received in on my arrival thirteen months ago. Each man went separately into a room with two warders, and was stripped and 'turned over.' My letters were taken from me, and I saw them tied up with my comb and brushes I had brought from Newgate. I gave up my official number-ticket on answering to my name, and was identified as the right man.

The reader may consider this identification somewhat unnecessary, but there has been more than one case of men changing their identity. Two men with different sentences, one say seven, and the other twenty years, for some reason or 'consideration,' whether arranged within the prison walls between the men themselves, or without the walls by their respective friends, these men agree to change names, numbers, and sentences. It may seem at first sight impossible; but if the men are nearly the same height and size, it it is not only possible, but, having seen as much as I have, I can quite believe it has been done. A crowd of men are brought down and turned over to warders who have never had charge of them, and who know very little or anything of them, and perhaps may not have ever noticed them before. John Smith, 19,625, is called for, and until he answers and produces his card of official number, the principal of the receiving ward does not know him from Adam, never having seen him, most likely, for nine or twelve months. John Smith's sentence is seven years for burglary, but when the name is called Thomas Brown, 19,732, whose sentence is twenty years for forgery, steps forward, presents Smith's numerical card, and claims his name. Once sent away from Millbank in their reversed names, and without the mistake being there and then discovered, the result is that Brown, who is well connected in

the outer world, instead of serving his long sentence, rejoins his friends at a very much earlier date, and emigrates to another country. Smith has already spent half his life in prison. He knows if he is liberated on a 'ticket' he will not be many weeks out, so it matters little to him, and probably he has the satisfaction of knowing that Brown has behaved handsomely and done the right thing to some one outside that is dear even to him—irreclaimable item of humanity as he apparently is. A man went from Newgate to Millbank with me who was not actually a whole month out of prison. Within twenty-eight days of his being discharged from Millbank with a two years' 'ticket' he re-entered the place on a new sentence of ten years, to which was added the time of his unexpired ticket of leave. The third day after his discharge he got drunk, joined some old associates, entered with them into a 'job,' and was captured 'redhanded.'

When we were all re-dressed we were furnished with new shoes, and each man received a canvas haversack, in which were two loaves of bread, a piece of cold boiled beef, and a quarter of a pound of cheese. There were large cans of coffee and cocoa, and the Doctor handed to one of the two principals two bottles of medicine. The weather was intensely hot, and some of the men had been subject to diarrhœa. Chains and handcuffs were then brought forward. After carefully fitting them each man had his left hand fastened by means of the handcuffs to long bright steel chains—three lots of twelve and one of four. The least of the three chief warders took command—he had with him either two principal, and either four or six warders. The whole were armed with swords, and had revolvers with them.

All were in the greatest excitement to know our destination. One of the officials happened to say, 'Come on after us to Great Western station,' when immediately 'Dartmoor' was whispered down the corridor as our destination.

CHAPTER III.

DARTMOOR.

In the yard outside were four omnibuses, in which we all bundled. The moment we stepped outside the prison door a tacit licence seemed to be given to the men to chatter and talk as they liked, and most of them availed themselves of it at once. To go through the public streets in daylight in such company and such guise was too horrible to think of. I used once to hoax myself with the idea that no one would recognise me, cropped, shaven, and disfigured; but ever since I had so readily remembered my friend A. on first seeing him enter the Catholic chapel, that illusion was dispelled, and my faith in disguises had vanished.

I had been fifteen months shut up, never having seen a newspaper or heard one scrap of news of any sort, and I looked about as we passed through the street for every poster on the walls, and more particularly for the placards of the various morning papers outside the newsvendors' shops, to try and gather from the 'sensation' announcements of their contents what was doing in the world now that I had left it. The theatrical posters, also, interested me greatly, and I saw the names of new pieces, and of new actors, that inflamed my curiosity greatly.

No sooner did we draw up at the Great Western Railway than immediately a crowd collected to see us alight. I cautiously cast my eyes around, dreading to catch sight of any known face, and I tried to keep as much behind other men as possible. I noticed that many gazed for a moment at us, and turned away with a look of contemptuous pity and disgust, which, strange to say, rather amused me than otherwise, particularly when I saw a sleek and smug-looking clergyman cast a very Pharisaical glance at so much sin and wickedness going to its just reward and punishment. I imagined him to be making mental notes of what he saw, with a view of dilating on it in his next sermon. I dare say he expatiated on ignorance and drink being the principal causes of those forty castaways having 'gone wrong.' Little did he dream that there were two reverend members of his own cloth

amid that convict gang—two ordained clergymen of the Established Church, to both of whom, two short years ago, it would have seemed impossible that they could ever have been in such a position. There they were though—one for applying to his own use moneys subscribed by the charitable to be distributed among the poor of his flock to whom he had expounded the law, and preached strict morality; the other for continuing to draw cheques upon his bankers, and inducing confiding tradesmen to give him good cash for the same, long after he had ceased to have any balance and his bankers had declined to keep open his account.

A large third-class saloon carriage was set specially apart for us in the night mail train for Plymouth, and as soon as we were all in and our warders, the men began begging tobacco from the people thronging the platform. Those next the windows, in spite of chains and handcuffs, thrust their heads out, notwithstanding the oft repeated orders of the warders to desist. I need hardly say those most prominent in so doing were not the most respectable of our gang.

'I say you, Sir, in the white choker, give a poor devil a bit of bacca,' cried one, thrusting his head from the window, and holding forth his free hand.

'You with the giglamps, throw us your cigar. Thank'ee, Sir, you're one of the right sort. May you never want a pipe and the stuff to put in it!'

'Now, then,' called out another man at the next window, seeing the success of the appeal to the gentleman in spectacles, and who had tossed his half-smoked cigar—'now, then, all of you, there's a good example; pray don't be backward in coming forward and following a straight tip. We ain't any of us proud, so if you hav'n't all got sheeroots, throw us baccy,' seeing one man about to take some out of his pouch; 'don't be stingy, do it well while you are about it. Pitch the lot here and I'll return you the case the next time I see you.'

A hearty laugh from all around greeted this, and the man actually did throw the pouch, which one of the warders in vain tried to obtain possession of. In an incredibly short time the pouch was emptied, and the prisoner who had first caught it threw it back to the man in the crowd.

'Here it is, Sir, and thank'ee, as I shan't be this way again for

a few weeks, I may as well let you have it back at once. We're a good deal more honest than many of you think us.'

'Now, then, won't anyone send for a gallon to let us drink the gentleman's health?'

Several people threw tobacco in at the windows of our carriage, which the officers in vain tried to prevent, both by appealing to the people on the platform to desist, and by endeavouring to get it from the men. No sooner was any thrown in than it was distributed, and in a few minutes three-fourths of the men had their mouths full of tobacco.

Amid the scuffling inside between some of the warders and the men, and the laughs of the bystanders, the engine's last shriek was heard, and we moved out of the station. The warders soon desisted from their scuffling with the men about the tobacco. I do not believe one of them got a scrap of it, nor do I think they either cared or wished to. What they did was but for show, and to keep up the appearance of doing their duty. We all soon settled down for our long night's journey. Some began to sing; I looked round about to see who I had for neighbours. I was lucky in being end man of one of the chains, and was consequently next to the door of the carriage.

My right-hand neighbour was a very decent old man, with whom I afterwards had many a long talk in our exercise walks at Dartmoor. His was rather a hard case, and I found on inquiry after I had obtained my liberty he had told me nothing but the truth. He came from Lancashire, and had kept a refreshment and luncheon room near the Exchange in one of the large manufacturing towns. He had amassed a little money which he had judiciously invested, and, being comfortably off, was bringing up his family in a respectable way. Some of this man's customers, young men in the various warehouses and counting-houses, sometimes tendered him postage stamps, asking him to oblige them with cash for them, which he generally did, and gave the full value always.

One day a young man he thought he had seen in his shop before asked him to give him cash for ten shillings' worth of postage stamps, which he did. By means of letters in the corners of all postage stamps they can be as readily traced and identified as bank notes are with their dates and numbers. Some little time

previous to this a post-office in some town in Lancashire had been broken into by burglars, and among other things taken were a large amount of postage stamps. This unfortunate ten shillings' worth had formed a portion of the stolen lot. The young man could not be recollected or discovered, and in spite of evidence to character, the fact that he had occupied his shop for many years, and all that his many respectable friends, including the incumbent of the parish, could do for him, he was tried, convicted, and sentenced for five years for possession of the stolen stamps. His family met with much commiseration and kindness. Steps were taken before the trial to secure his property in a legal way to his wife and children, and during the whole time the old man was doing his time, which he spent in knitting stockings, his wife and family carried on the business as before. Being in Lancashire after my liberation I called and lunched at his place, and though I did not make myself known, I readily ascertained that all he had told me was true.

Opposite to me sat a very ill-assimilated pair. One a stout good-looking reverend gentleman—one of those I mentioned before—and the other about as repulsive a little blackguard as ever the purlieus of Westminster or Whitechapel produced; the poor quondam clerico kept looking at the man he was linked to with such a piteous expression of disgust I could hardly refrain from laughing. So lugubrious a face I had seldom seen off the stage. I consoled myself with the idea that after all, though we had the society of the little 'rough,' and many more of his fraternity, they possessed one virtue *now* that I fear they do not all possess when in the outer world—they are *clean*. When encased in their native dirt what must some of these creatures be like! This man was starting on his second 'lagging' or term of servitude, and had been in every borough and county gaol in the home counties. His peculiar 'lay' or line of business, which always brought him into trouble, was the stealing of pewter pots.

As we proceeded on our journey I recognised more faces I had seen at Newgate and Millbank. One, a nice-looking young fellow, barely eighteen years of age, who had been collector for a City warehouse, and having become introduced to a well-known actress, old enough to have been his mother, was fascinated with her charms to such an extent that he spent not only his own money, but his master's too, upon her, with the result of having to travel

to Dartmoor in safe custody. He had five years, and I am afraid he became during his time thoroughly ruined. His widowed mother died, shortly after his conviction, of a broken heart. On his release and coming of age he would be entitled to a sum of money, I believe £1,000. Several prisoners, including one of the parsons, besides myself, tried our best to give him good advice to steer clear of other prisoners of a certain stamp, and urged him to leave England with his money for one of the colonies the moment he was free, but I fear our advice was unheeded. He was made a dead set at by some other prisoners, who schooled him for a career of vice and crime that assuredly would bring him there again. Before I left I noticed a great change in him for the worse. He had been thoroughly instructed in all manner of manœuvres, and I am sorry to say he seemed an apt pupil. The last time I saw him at exercise, on the Sunday before I left Dartmoor, his face had completely altered and lost all the last remnants of innocency. It had assumed that peculiar expression so prevalent among habitual thieves, and which, to those who know it, is unmistakable—a 'leary look,' in which fear, defiance, and cunning are mixed up together. During the term of his imprisonment he became an excellent working tailor, and was 'on the board,' as it is termed, among those who are efficient hands, their trade outside being tailoring, and who are employed in the snips' shop at Dartmoor in making officers' uniforms for other prisons.

I heard many a history from prisoners, some sad and some amusing, and I will relate those I think may be interesting, or illustrative of some of the evils I wish to point out in the convict system, after our arrival at Dartmoor.

Gradually, as night wore on, the men dropped off to sleep, leaning one against the other. When the majority were slumbering, I had a long conversation with the parson opposite to me. He was an exceedingly pleasant and well-informed man, and an intellectual conversation, even under such circumstances, was a treat after so long a severance from congenial society. We were afterwards thrown a good deal into each other's company. I did not ask him any question as to the cause of his being there, nor did he evince any curiosity to me.

It is the etiquette among prisoners never to ask a man what he is 'in for.' The badge upon his left arm gives his sentence as well

as his number, so there is no need to inquire 'what he has got.' We have all heard of honour among thieves. They have also rules of etiquette, and that is one. If a man likes to be communicative on the subject of his own affairs, that is another thing; but, till he does, no questions are to be asked. This rule, however, does not at all prevent other men, who may or may not know the correct version of a prisoner's crime, from giving to their walking companions a full history of any man in the prison.

It being night, very little notice was taken of our gang at the various stations the train stopped at. During the whole journey not a man (either officer or prisoner, left the carriage till, at six o'clock on a lovely bright morning at the end of August, we all alighted at Plymouth. Here we were glad to stretch our legs, and, very few people being about, were allowed to walk up and down as far as the chain would permit. Some people came and gave us a stare and walked away again. I expect a gang of convicts is no uncommon sight at Plymouth Station. Two benevolent-looking middle-aged ladies approached one of the gangs with timid curious looks, which, being noticed by the man who did the best part of the chaffing at Paddington, he addressed them:

'Oh, we are quite safe, marm, and taken great care of,' shaking his handcuff and chain. 'You may come quite close; we sha'n't bite, and ain't harf as savage as we look.'

Far from being encouraged by this invitation, they hastened away.

Three omnibuses were ready waiting at the station to take us to Princestown, on Dartmoor, where the convict prison is situated. We all get in and off we started, the officers riding outside and on the steps. As soon as we were a few miles out of the town we got out to walk up the hills. The fresh morning air and the beautiful scenery were charming after thirteen months of looking on to Pentagon 3 of Millbank, with an occasional view of Lambeth Palace and the Thames on window-cleaning mornings. Our journey was nearly all up hill; Princestown and the prison being about 1,800 feet above the level of the sea. It is, I believe, the highest inhabited town or village in England, if not in the British Isles.

Princestown simply consists of the barracks and houses of those connected with the prison and their families, together with a few shopkeepers who supply them. The place altogether is wild in the

extreme, in fact a howling wilderness, and, with the exception of the land brought into cultivation by the convict labour, produces nothing but granite, heather, gorse, and fog.

Dartmoor was originally built for the safe custody of prisoners of war in the old French wars of the latter part of last and the commencement of this century. Whoever first conceived the idea of confining Frenchmen in such a place must have been actuated by one of two very opposite motives. He must have either been instigated by a devilish but most refined cruelty to inflict on the enemies of his country, not only the punishment of man by imprisonment, but of nature too, in selecting a site with such a climate as Dartmoor. To a Frenchman, born in a lovely climate, to be condemned to exist amid the fogs and howling storms of that Devonshire wilderness must have been simply dreadful and worse than death. Hundreds of them succumbed to the climate, as the French burying ground now attests.

The other reason that induced the founder of the place to select such a site I think must have been a patriotic desire to save his native country from invasion. If Frenchmen, or any other foreigners. could only be led to think that the climate of England was all like Dartmoor, nothing would ever tempt them to invade such a country. The climate of England has always possessed but a bad reputation with foreigners. One year's, one winter's residence at Princestown would go far to convince anyone that its bad reputation was most justly deserved.

Strange to say, Dartmoor is called a Convict *Invalid* Station, and, stranger still, it really is a healthy place though so disagreeable. Being of a rheumatic constitution, I gave myself up for lost when I saw the first two or three wet fogs, but during the three years I spent there I never felt one twinge.

I have said so much against the place, let me say one thing in its favour. Though I am used to a mountainous country, never have I seen such lovely sunrises as I have at Dartmoor. Such changes of colour, and such magnificent colour as would make an artist's reputation could he but transfix them on his canvas. I would certainly recommend some of our aspiring artists to visit this place for the sunrise. Sunsets were shut out from our view, and we were always indoors before the sun went down.

Greatly did we all enjoy that walk, except one poor fellow, who

was too ill to enjoy anything and had to take repeated doses of the cholera mixture supplied by the Doctor before starting.

About midway on our journey, we halted at a roadside public-house, and all went in to breakfast. The cans of coffee and cocoa, such as had not been drunk on the journey cold, were now produced and made hot, and bread was served out to the men all round.

After a halt of about an hour, our journey was resumed, sometimes riding, and where the hills are very steep, walking. At last we caught sight of the gloomy-looking prison, our future home for various periods. We looked out for any of the working gangs, but only saw, here and there in the distance, a few. We soon, however, came upon the piquets of the Civil Guard, armed with rifles and bayonets, who form a cordon all round the prison and each of the working gangs. Stone-quarrying, turf-cutting, trenching, and agricultural cultivation are the outdoor work carried on here. Should a man try to escape, the guards would fire on him immediately. Nearly all the Civil Guard are old soldiers.

Near the prison are the rifle butts, at which the guards and warders practise with their rifles, so as to be able to bring down a fugitive if needful. It is in foggy weather some men are tempted to 'try it on' for a run, but I doubt if any ever escape; though, if arrangements could be planned with outside friends to assist, it might be done easily enough. There is a standing reward of £3 to anyone arresting an escaped convict, so that the whole country round about are always on the lookout for anyone that has a prison crop. Could a man be able to get his clothes changed, there possibly might be some little chance, but not otherwise. On foggy mornings the outside gangs of men do not go out, and when the fog comes on, the guards close in on the working party, and in case of the fog increasing, a bell is sounded from the prison, and the gangs are all called in.

At last we reached the portals of the prison; a dreary, heavy-looking granite building, or series of buildings, surrounded by a high wall. It is placed somewhat in a hollow on the table-land of Dartmoor Forest, or Wilderness. The gate is as gloomy a piece of architecture as ever I saw. Dante's inscription on the gate of Inferno should be inscribed on it. There is some inscription, but I did not get a chance of reading it. On each side are the usual

notice boards, warning people against bringing anything into the prison.

As soon as we had all alighted at the gate, on either side of which stand the Governor's and Deputy-Governor's residences, we marched down the outer yard into the receiving ward, where all was prepared for our arrival.

The first thing was to remove the chains and handcuffs, and set every man free from the shackles.

We found ourselves in a long passage, about twelve feet wide, lighted by a skylight, and I saw, before I had been in the place ten minutes, that the discipline was much stricter than at Millbank. The men were marched off, in squads of ten at a time, to have a bath. My turn came after a while. We were taken by two warders down the passage and across a yard to the bathing-house, where there was a number of baths, some twenty or more, in a row. They were small square stone baths, about four feet to four feet six inches square, and three feet deep. Two steps descended into them, and a wooden partition divided each bath from the other. A wooden seat ran the length of the whole lot of baths, and behind the seats was the passage. The men sat on the seats, with their backs to the passage and facing the water, to undress, while the officers paraded up and down. When we had bathed we were marched back, and then dinner was served.

The first dinner was boiled mutton, each man's meat being in half a pint of the liquor it was boiled in, seasoned with pepper, salt, and vegetables. This was in a deep round tin can or basin; and in another tin, much shallower, and fitting into the top of the meat tin so as to form a lid, were potatoes and cabbage.

After eating our dinner in the passage of the receiving ward, we were told to take off all our jackets, waistcoats, and breeches, and to place them in a row on the floor, every man's suit by itself, and in the same order we were then sitting. Of course some men could not do as they were told, but must mix up their clothes with those of other prisoners, which brought the warders down on them directly. When we were so far undressed the whole forty were marched into a large room leading out of the passage, with forms all round. A large official-looking table stood in the middle, and two large windows on one side looked into a yard. At the end of the table, facing the door, sat the chief warder, an exceedingly

good-looking soldierly man, whose military frock coat was decorated with Crimean and Turkish medals, showing he had seen service. I believe he had been sergeant-major of the Queen's Bays. With his back to the fireplace, behind the Chief, stood a gentleman in mufti, who I needed not a second glance to see was a soldier likewise. This was the Deputy-Governor, as gentlemanly a little fellow as ever stepped, and to whom I cannot but think the duties must have been very repugnant. Except when in his office, and prisoners were brought before him on report, I do not think Captain A. was ever known to speak before a prisoner. He never, however, let a thing escape him, and any remark he had to make he made to the principal warder on duty.

At the side of the table sat the Doctor, with a book before him, and a bundle of papers—the medical reports on each prisoner from the doctor of Millbank. The forty men were all told to stand over on the side of the room farthest from the window, and there to strip. Every man did so, and the whole forty were as naked as Kaffirs. When a man enters a prison's walls he must leave every feeling of decency, modesty, or shame outside. The Chief then left his seat and stood up beside the table, while every man paraded himself before him, pretty much in the same way as we did on our arrival at Millbank. As they passed this survey they were directed to go over to the window side of the room, where were forty bundles of clean clothes placed in rows. Each man helped himself to a bundle, and covered his nakedness as quickly as he could. By this means, as all the clothes we had arrived in were left on the other side of the room, there was no fear of a man taking anything into the prison he might have secreted about his clothes.

The Doctor called each man before him whose medical report from Millbank required him to take special notice of, and examined him, comparing any deformity or infirmity with the written description, and asking several questions. Greatly to my surprise, he called the prisoners by their names and not by numbers.

As each man had passed before the chief warder, he also compared him with the written description he held before him, and I noticed he asked several men to point out certain marks upon their bodies which were noted in their descriptions. Two men, I noticed, had their backs examined. There were the evidences of former floggings, or 'bashings,' as the prisoners call them. The Doctor

made a memorandum against my name, 'tailors' shop,' which removed no little anxiety from my mind.

When all were dressed, so far as flannels, shirts, drawers, and stockings were concerned, we were marched out, and resumed the outer clothes we had arrived in, and which had all been most carefully 'turned over' during our absence. Every pin a man had stuck in his jacket was removed.

Then came in the master-bootmaker, whom no uniform ever designed would have made look like anything but a regular little 'snob.' I do not mean a Thackerayean Snob, but a 'cobbler.' With him came three prisoners laden with thick strong heavy hobnailed boots. Every man was fitted with new boots; some with two pairs of watertights. These were the men destined for outdoor work, 'the bogs,' as the places where the different outside gangs worked were called. Every man retained his shoes for Sundays, and also to wear as slippers in the evening after work. Then all our caps were altered. At Millbank every man wore his cap as suited him; here all the caps were turned down to the regulation pattern, and securely stitched into that shape. Every man who was drafted for outdoor work had an extra suit of clothes supplied to him, and a blue and red striped canvas short jacket, reaching just below the hips, and termed a 'slop.' This he wore over all, and it was the only protection against either cold or rain, except during the winter months, when every man was supplied with a thick blue Guernsey shirt.

While the boot-fitting had been going on, at the other end of the passage one of the warders was operating upon the men's heads and beards. I thought our hair had been cut close enough at Millbank, but here cropping is a mania with all the officials. As close as scissors can well cut was my hair clipped by this man; I had not a single hair a quarter of an inch long. All were served alike. Whenever a warder wants to worry a man and has no plausible reason to report him or even find fault with him, he has always one unfailing source of annoyance—calling him out to have his hair cut. I have known a warder call a man out every night for a week to be cropped.

When all were supplied with clothes and cropped to the satisfaction of the warders, we were called in, a few at a time, and each man received a new register number on a small card, a small

brush like a nail-brush, a comb, and a towel. Those who required spectacles were desired to give in their names to be submitted to the Doctor. Each batch, as we were finished off and received our register-number ticket, were marched away to the respective prisons and wards we were allotted to.

Just as I and four others arrived outside in the yard, the warder told us to stand in a line against the wall. The tramp tramp of many feet marching soon told us the cause of our halt; the outside gangs were returning from work. On they came in long lines, two and two, each gang with its officers, in military style, and keeping excellent step and time. At the inner gate of the prison stood the chief warder, book in hand. Every officer saluted him as the gangs came up. The principal warder in charge of each department of work called out the number of men he was bringing back from work and the number of the gang. This the Chief checked against the number taken out in the morning. Every officer, as he reached the lodge at this gate, delivered up his rifle, bayonet, belt, and cartridge-box to the armourer, who, with his assistant, stood ready to receive them. On they came, gang after gang, till some 250 or 300 men must have passed us, all looking dusty and weary. Our appearance attracted notice from them all, and they knew at once we were 'new chums.'

When all had arrived, the Civil Guard closed up the rear, marching with fixed bayonets. We were then conducted into No. 4 prison. This was a large granite building, originally constructed for the French prisoners, but now adapted to modern convict appliances. All the floors were taken out, and galleries of cells, like Newgate, were constructed one over the other in four tiers; but the place was exactly the reverse of that in the great City prison; there the galleries went all round, forming one central hall; here the building was divided into two by the cells being constructed back to back in the middle of the building, leaving two large halls, one on each side. There are about fifty cells on each landing or gallery, and four landings, reached by two flights of stairs, one at each end of the hall. These halls are called 'A Hall' and 'B Hall,' and there is only one communication between the two, on the ground floor on the middle. The whole of the cells and their supports are constructed of iron, the sides and doors being corrugated iron, and the floors, both of cells and

landings, thick slate slabs. A strong iron rail runs along each landing. No prisoners were there when we arrived, and I was mounted up to the top floor of all. Over the door of the cell was a proper receptacle for the little card with my numerical register on it, 35,796, into which the warder placed it carefully, after entering it on his ward slate. He asked me what was the number of my gang.

'I don't know the number, Sir; but it is in the tailors' shop.'

'All right, go in there; and the warder of the landing, Mr. Dicks, will be here soon.'

The moment the door was closed, I saw what a little dark hole I was put into; it was some few minutes before I could thoroughly see anything. As soon as I could, I set to work to examine my future home. In size it was about as large as a small second-class state room on board an emigrant ship. The cell was 7 feet long by 4 feet broad, and 8 feet high; by the side of the door was a narrow window of thick rough plate glass, beneath which was a small flap-table, that had to be let down when the hammock was slung. Only at this table, and immediately close to the window, was there light enough to see anything distinctly. Over the table and under the window was a narrow shelf on which to place a candle. Over the door, from side to side of the cell, was a wooden shelf; here were kept spare boots and shoes, cleaning-rags, &c. Opposite to the door, about 5 feet 6 inches from the ground, was another and wider shelf; on this were arranged the bed clothes, done up in a neat round compact roll; a tin pint mug, a tin plate, a small brass candlestick with a curiously contrived pair of snuffers, made ingeniously out of one piece of tin, a tin knife, a wooden spoon, a wooden salt-cellar, and an ordinary school slate. Below this shelf and at the opposite end of the cell to the window and flap-table was the hammock, neatly rolled and strapped against the wall. An ordinary wooden stable bucket, with iron handle and hoops, was on the floor alongside of a low wooden stool; a small hand-broom, and, in a corner under the table, a scrubbing-brush and flannel, two tin tallies, with the number of the cell, prison, and hall, hanging behind the door, completed the furniture of this not over-luxurious apartment. My attention was next drawn to the ventilation of my new abode. This was on a very primitive principle. There was a gap about 5 inches deep at the bottom of the

door to let the air in; the door in fact was made 5 inches too short, and over the shelf whereon the bedding and utensils were stowed, which I always called the dresser, were some twenty round holes, an inch in diameter, to let the air out. Each cell door had a spyhole, with a cover to it.

By the time I had completed my survey, the gangs came in, and a pretty clatter and noise they made. In our hall were some 200 men, and as many more in the next one. Clatter, clatter, up the stairs they came, and as each man entered his cell he slammed the door to as hard as he could, as if he was spitting his spite upon it for his day's labour. Then came a clatter of tins, which at first I could not make out, followed by a considerable shouting between the warders below in the hall and those on the landings. Presently a warder came in a fury to the door.

'Why don't you put out your broom and your tins?' Then, opening the door, he said:

'Oh, you're a new hand, are you? Put out your broom like that,' pointing to my next-door neighbour's broom, 'and your tin mug and plate.'

While he was explaining this the principal in the hall below was shouting to him for his 'roll,' the number of men he had upon his landing. This the warder ascertained by running along the landing and counting the brooms. As soon as the roll is called the brooms should be taken in. I, knowing not how long it should remain out, left mine where it was; but presently a warder came by and kicked it in with such a vengeance, I wonder it did not go through the partition, and thanked my stars that I was out of its way. I next heard a further noise of opening and shutting cell doors, which came nearer and nearer, till at last my own door was opened, and a little six-ounce loaf of bread handed to me, and I found my tin mug that I had put outside was filled with gruel. This I took in, and sat down to my first supper at Dartmoor.

After probably half or three-quarters of an hour, during which all seemed very quiet, I heard a great shuffling of feet, and guessed the warders had returned from their tea. Both cells on each side of me were tenanted. The man in one kept knocking, and wanted to enter into conversation; but as I knew this was quite contrary to the rules I did not answer him, and at last he got tired and desisted. In the other cell I every now and then heard a curious

clanking noise I could not make out at all. The next morning I discovered what it was. My neighbour was a black dress man and wore fetters, a heavy chain, one end of which was fastened with riveted rings round each ankle, and the middle of it was held up to his waist by a strap. His dress was particoloured black and drab; one side one colour, one the other; the front of one sleeve black, and the back drab, and the reverse with the other sleeve. The same with the breeches or knickerbockers, which were fastened with buttons down the sides of the legs to admit of their being fastened with the fetters on. He was condemned to this punishment for either striking or threatening an officer, and had been 'bashed' or flogged besides. Night and day, in bed and out of bed, did he wear these chains, and every time he moved in bed they clanked and rattled; and sometimes in turning round they would strike against the corrugated iron partition of the cell; not a very cheering sound to hear in the dead hours of the night.

When Mr. Dicks returned from his tea, far from his day's toil being over, he had plenty of work yet before him. The fifty men on his landing all had some wants to be attended to, but he came to look after his new birds first. Dicks was a queer sort of old fellow, and it all depended on how you took him and he took you, whether he was polite or the reverse. He had served in other branches of Her Majesty's services on land and sea before he became a convict warder. He had served and fought in the Royal Marines, and his breast on Sundays looked gay with Crimean, Turkish, Cape, and Indian medals. He had risen to the rank of sergeant-major, and those of my readers who know what an old sergeant-major of Marines is, will very well understand that it took an exceedingly clever fellow to beat to windward of Mr. Warder Dicks. To hear him speak, one might imagine him as innocent as a lamb, and as green as a schoolboy, but just try to come the hanky-panky and play the old soldier with him, and there was no man in Dartmoor Prison more up to every move than the old Marine. If a man was straightforward, well-behaved, and gave him no trouble, Dicks was the most obliging fellow possible. Let him only find out a man in some artful little game, and he would be 'down on' him and hunt his life out almost. He came to me, and I could see his quiet old eye taking stock of me at once. He

supplied me with soap, salt, and cleaning-rags. He then took my jacket to be badged, giving me another one to wear till it was done. He gave me clean sheets, and showed me where to fasten my hammock to. He told me where to place each article, and supplied me with a candle. Then telling me that when I heard 'beds down' called out, I must prepare my hammock for the night, and must not do it till then, and warning me that I had two 'rum 'uns' alongside of me, he left me to go to some one else.

I had nothing to read, and could only sit and listen to the noises going on, conjecturing what they could be. The entire block of 400 cells being all framed in iron, there was hardly a door slammed to in the whole building that did not more or less vibrate throughout every cell. The effect when every cell door in the whole hall was slammed to at once, as they were on certain occasions, such as school nights, was like a volley of musketry.

At last the signal 'beds down' was given, and 400 hammocks were let go at once, or nearly so, shaking the whole fabric. I being an old hand at hammock-bed making had no difficulty, but some men, on their first acquaintance with these comfortable resting places, make a great muddle till they get accustomed to them. Sometimes a hammock strap would carry away and let the man down to the ground, but that was his own fault for not looking well to the state his straps were in. The warders would always give a man a good strap if one of his was worn out.

There is one luxury a convict certainly has, and that is a good comfortable warm bed, and after a day on the bogs of Dartmoor he needs it. There is no bed in a hammock, but a man has two good blankets (three in winter), a capital rug, and two stout coarse linen sheets, with a wool or hair pillow. A great many of the prisoners never slept in such beds when free men. Men have told me repeatedly, especially men from agricultural districts, that they were better fed and had better beds in prison than ever they had in their lives before.

Soon after 'beds down' is sounded a warder is heard coming up the stairs, and he expects to find every candle put out. There are gas lights along each landing railing, so that there is more or less light in every cell, according to its position with respect to the nearest gas burner. A bell is then heard, which is the signal for all the 'day warders' to leave the prison, as the 'night warders'

have come on duty. Every man is now expected to be in bed, and if the night watch finds a man out of bed he is liable to be reported. At regular intervals throughout the night the night watch comes round, looking into every cell. By placing the bull's eye of his lantern against the glass of the window, and peeping through the spyhole in the door, he can see very well if a man is in bed or not, asleep or awake. Many a time have I been woke up with the sudden flash of the bull's eye in my face.

At 5.30 the great bell of the prison rings for two minutes, when every man springs from his hammock, and by the time he has given himself a good wash in his bucket, all over if he likes, the warders are on their landings.

On each landing the men take it in turns to be orderlies for a week. There are four appointed to assist the warders in carrying up the bread baskets, cocoa, tea and gruel cans, the dinners, and all other things required. The warder, on reaching his landing, lets out two of the orderlies from their cells.

On his door being opened every man goes down on his hands and knees and scrubs and cleans so much of the slate floor of the landing as is in front of his own cell. Thus the whole landing is done. He then puts his tin mug and plate outside his door, and proceeds to clean the floor of his cell and put up his bedding in a certain way.

The hammock remains slung as when slept in, but the sheets, rug, and blankets are folded in a particular manner and neatly laid across the hammock in regular rotation, hanging over it. The whole bedding is thus open for inspection. In this way it is left till the man comes in to dinner, when it is carefully and neatly rolled up: a sheet in the centre; then a blanket; then the other sheet; then the remaining blankets; and outside, the red, brown, and yellow rug. The roll is placed on the dresser shelf with a neat, smooth edge outwards, that somewhat resembles a target, the rings being of different colours and the white sheet making a very fair bull's eye. The end of the hammock next the window is then unstrapped and let go, and, with the pillow placed in the centre, is tightly rolled up. The straps belonging to the foot end, joined together, are long enough to go round it and through the head fastening, by which it is firmly and neatly strapped up against the end wall of the cell.

If a man wants to speak to the warder for anything—to put

his name down to see the Doctor, Governor, Chief Warder, or Chaplain, or to leave his cell to go to the closet—he puts out his broom under the door.

Breakfast is served, consisting of three-quarters of a pint of very fair cocoa, and a loaf of 9 or 12 ounces of bread, according as a man is on half or full diet. During the morning, before breakfast, the warders let the men out two or three at a time to take their buckets to empty, scrub out, and fill with clean water. If a man is quiet, well-behaved, and gives no trouble, some of the warders will allow him to empty and refill his bucket twice in the day; but once is the strict rule.

On the prisoners' breakfast being served, the warders go to their own. All the warders have their breakfasts and teas in the prison, and there are mess-rooms provided for them. The married officers go outside to their own homes in the barracks or cottages at Princestown to dinner, but the single men take all their meals in the officers' mess-room in the prison. The officers all have the privilege of purchasing certain supplies at the contract prices from the steward of the prison.

By the time breakfast is over it is half-past seven o'clock in summer. On the return of the officers the men are marched to morning prayers. There are two chapels at Dartmoor, one for Protestants and one for Catholics. All the Catholics are kept in No. 2 Prison by themselves, and, except at their work, never mix with the Protestants. The Protestant chapel is a large square building, plainly but appropriately fitted up: at one end is the communion-table, pulpit, and reading-desk; at the opposite end is a gallery for the Governor and officers' families. The chief warder has an elevated pew to himself half-way up the chapel, against the south wall. There are three more of these elevated pews, in which principals take their positions. Intermixed with the forms on which the prisoners sit are raised seats, on which warders are perched, so as to enable them to have a commanding view of the men. In front of the pulpit and reading-desk those prisoners who are members of the choir are seated, and near them is a harmonium, very fairly played by one of the schoolmasters. Under the gallery the Civil Guard are drawn up, with their loaded rifles, and their captain at their head. A few prayers, a hymn, and a short exposition comprise the service, and as soon as it is finished one half the Civil Guard

march out to take their station in the yard, and the other half remain in the chapel till all the prisoners have marched out, when they bring up the rear.

The men had marched into chapel in wards or landings, and so they marched out; but on reaching the yard they break off, and every man goes to the station of his gang. A large number painted on the parade ground wall indicates the muster place of every gang. All the new men, including myself, were directed where to join our respective gangs, and were handed over to the officer of the gang. A warder's work-duty with his gang is perfectly distinct from his ward-duty inside the prison, and brings him into contact with quite a different lot of men, though of course some of the men may be both in their landing and in their gang in charge of the same warder. On the parade every man is searched—'rubbed down' it is called. He unbuttons his jacket, waistcoat, and slop, if he wears one, takes off his cap, which he holds in one hand, and his pocket-handkerchief out of his *one* pocket, which he holds in the other. The warder, or assistant warder, then feels him down to see he has nothing contraband upon him. No man is allowed to bring any food out of his cell on any pretence. What he does not eat he must return in his dinner tins. While the assistants are rubbing the men down, the warder counts his men, and if he has time to spare rubs some of them down himself. The principal of the week, whose duty it is, then comes and counts each gang, and if his tally and the warder's agree, the number is booked by both; if not, they both count again. The principal takes all the numbers of each gang to the chief warder, who enters them in his book. While all this is going on the men stand to attention, and the Deputy-Governor, Captain A., and sometimes the Governor himself, Captain B., walks up and down, giving an inspecting eye all round.

When the Chief has received all the returns of the numbers in each gang, also from the infirmary, and from 'No. 5,' the punishment cells, and entered them in his book, he adds up the total; and if it agrees with the number known to be in the prison, the word is given for the gangs to march off. The outside gangs go first, the red-collar men who attend to the farm leading off. These are generally old men who have a knowledge of horses, cows, and farm life. They are dressed in blue, with red cuffs and collars, and are considered a privileged gang.

Dartmoor privileges are very questionable. For instance, one of the privileges of this red-collar gang is that they go out to feed the horses and cows before breakfast, and they are the only gang, except hospital orderlies and one-third of the cooks, that have any work to do on Sundays.

After them march the quarrymen, who labour in the granite quarries; the turf-cutters, road-makers, and bogmen generally; and then old Mr. Dicks's gang, who go about the place emptying the latrines both in the prison and in the town outside, and carrying their loads on to the land, where it is utilised by the gardening and agricultural gangs.

The gardeners really are a privileged gang, and generally consist of well-conducted men who are doing the last twelve or six months of their time. A large amount of very fine vegetables are grown here, the best of which are sent to market.

There was also the laundry gang; for, there being no women at Dartmoor, all the prisoners' clothes were washed by prisoners, and a strong gang it was. One of the best warders in the whole establishment had charge of it, and though a very different man in appearance, he always reminded me of Paddy at Millbank, by the care he took of his men. He was liked very generally, and many a man schemed to get into little Welsh's gang.

Another 'soap-suds' gang followed them—the cleaners, who kept all the prison halls, the long stone passages, and chapel floors clean. Their warder was just the reverse of Mr. Welsh, and was such a tyrannical old fidget that his men were always begging the chief warder to remove them into some other gang. Shortly the reader will learn how I fell foul of this man, and, on appeal to higher authorities, got the better of him.

Then follow the artisan gangs—blacksmiths, masons or stonecutters, and carpenters. In the carpenters' gang are also the painters, glaziers, tinworkers, and a few others.

The shoemakers come next, two very strong gangs. A great deal of work is done here by these men. All the boots for the Metropolitan Police are made by the convicts at Dartmoor, as well as for the various convict prisons. With the shoemakers are the saddlers and harness-makers.

Next comes the tailors' gang, with whom are incorporated the bookbinder and school orderly.

The last gang is that of the oakum-pickers and stocking-knitters. The cooks and bakers do not parade with the other gangs outside, nor do the hospital orderlies.

The artisan and outside gangs march off to their work at once; some of the latter have two miles to march to get there.

As each gang goes out the warders take their firearms, and a certain number of Civil Guards are told off to attend them, while the rest of the guards go on picket duty.

The parade ground is now left at liberty for the indoor gangs —shoemakers, tailors, and oakum men—who fall in two and two and have half-an-hour's exercise before going to their work. Now it is that conversation is permitted, and at these exercise parades and on Sundays I have heard many a history from prisoners, some of which I will give to the reader in the course of this narrative. Some warders take a special delight in preventing two decent men from getting together, and seem to glory in placing beside a well-educated man, whom they call a 'gentleman lag,' some coarse foul-mouthed brute, whose every fourth word is either an oath or disgusting obscenity.

As the men fall in on their arrival at the parade so they must walk. The object with two men who wish to get together is to arrive at the gang close after each other, so that one takes front and the other rear file. By a little scheming this can generally be done, either by hurrying on or waiting behind, as the case may be, whether there is a blank file to fill up or not. There are many little 'dodges' men have for this purpose, especially for 'playing the waiting game.' A man can drop his handkerchief, or his boot-lace may require attention at the moment; but the warders are up to all these games, and, if they notice a man doing this, will be down on him at once. Many a time when I was in the tailors' gang has the warder, a wretched man named Wilkins, quietly and maliciously upset the whole arrangements of the gang as to their walking mates. It frequently happens that there is an odd file in the company, *i.e.* there may be fifty men in the front rank and only forty-nine in the rear. If Mr. Wilkins, on looking down the ranks, saw there were several pairs who had been fortunate enough to 'hit it to rights,' and had got exactly into the order for walking they wished for, he would, instead of giving the order 'By the *right* march,' call out 'By the *left* march.' Then, of course, the

gang would be led by one odd file, which would not do at all; so the order would immediately be given, 'Close up the files there, close up in front,' to obey which every rear file would have to advance to the vacant place in front of him, so the whole gang would find themselves walking either before or behind the 'chum' he wanted to be with.

Sometimes the men would 'ring the changes,' and so get to the place they wanted, but this was very dangerous. A man once did that with me. He wanted particularly to have some conversation with me, and he, not I, 'rung the change,' or slipped away from the man he was with and came to me, while the man who was walking at my side went into the other's place. After we had walked round the parade two or three times, Wilkins noticed it, and insisted that I had changed my place. He had long wished for a good chance to report me, and he did so. I lost forty-eight marks, which I afterwards had restored to me. What I did when I was reported I will tell farther on, when I come to another occasion of my being brought before the Governor.

After our exercise this first morning, at which I was paired off with an elderly man named Pemberton, we left the parade ground and went upstairs to the top of No. 3 Prison, into a large loft in the roof, where the 'tailors' shop' was, in those days. No. 3 Prison is not divided into cells, but consists of three floors, two of 'association rooms,' which I will fully describe when I come to relate my being removed from the cells to one of them, and the top floor, the 'tailors' shop.' Since then, and during my residence there, a new tailors' shop has been constructed, and all three floors of No. 3 are made association rooms.

On arrival in the shop the men paraded and stood up in line two deep, while Warder Wilkins and the principal of No. 3 counted them. No one had flown away: all were there.

'Break off to your work;' and every man went to his place, and from various holes and corners, off shelves, from under forms and stools, each one found his bag containing his work—materials and tools. During the little confusion caused by this, Wilkins marched me and three others—the two parsons and a big Irishman—to the farther end of the workshop, where was the master-tailor's cutting-room, and there we waited while he went in to report our arrival.

The master-tailor was a peppery little man, but a good-hearted

one, very fond of 'blowing up,' and never liked to be contradicted. He was generally as much liked as Wilkins was detested, and was always called 'Jemmy;' what for I never could discover, as his name was not James.

He asked me if I was a 'tradesman,' and on my replying, 'No, Sir, I have only worked at tailoring since I was in Millbank,' he ordered me into the repairing squad. The assistant warder found me a seat in what was called a 'bay,' three sides of a square fitted with three forms, having the open vacant side towards the middle of the room. Adjoining the master-tailor's cutting-room were two other small rooms, constructed of rough boards, and old window frames for glass partitions. One on the left hand was the book-binders' workshop, and that on the right the school orderly's bench, where he covered all the library books and ticketed them, ruled copybooks, and did all manner of odd jobs for the schoolmasters. One duty of the school orderly was to dust the two chapels. He wore a knickerbocker suit of blue cloth.

The workshop was in the roof storey of the building, and the sides of the room were not so high as the middle in consequence of the roof slanting. There was a row of upright posts, at intervals of about ten or twelve feet, all down each side of the long room, every post supporting a beam carrying the roof. The spaces between the posts and under the slanting roof were called 'bays.' In the centre, between the bays, at the end near to the master-tailor's room, sat the best workmen, on what was called the 'board,' but was merely the floor of the room kept at that part specially for them. These were mostly men who were tailors by trade outside, and some few of the best hands, who had been so long in prison that they had learned to become good workmen. About half-way down the room, and in the middle, was a stove set in brickwork, where the irons, or geese, were heated for the men to press their work. Beyond this stove was a similar space to the board, where sometimes the stocking-knitters would come up and work, if there was nothing else the space was required for, such as serving out and marking blankets, sheets, rugs, and all large things, with the 'Broad Arrow.' Everything is branded with this sign. Every sheet, blanket, and rug has eight of these broad arrows, or crow's feet, stamped upon them with red or black paint.

The bays were all allotted to different work. Following the

side on the left, the next bay to the bookbinders' shop was occupied by a man cutting out prison clothes—jackets, vests, knickerbockers, shirts, flannels, and everything a prisoner wears. The next two bays accommodated nine men each, who mended prison shirts, flannels, sheets, blankets, &c. The next was occupied by a prisoner with a stiff leg, who gave out the work to the menders in the adjoining two bays.

At the early part of the week all the clean shirts, flannels, stockings, &c. that require mending are brought up into the tailors' shop to the stiff-legged prisoner's bay. He looks them over, and those that are worn out and too bad for mending he condemns. The others he gives out to the men in the two bays on his right hand, who repair them. Old ones are torn up; the best parts are saved and put on one side to make patches for repairing others with, and the bad and ragged parts are sent into the various prisons for cleaning-rags and dusters. At certain times sheets, blankets, rugs, &c. come up to undergo a similar process. No prisoner need have a ragged blanket, sheet, or rug, as they are changed whenever necessary. Some two or three men in the sheet-mending bays are employed darning stockings. When all the shirts, flannels, &c. are repaired, these men are then employed in making new ones. There is always plenty of work for them, and each man at the close of the day brings in his work to the table, where it is examined by Larry, as the stiff-legged man was called. Any article not properly done is returned to the prisoner to do again. Wilkins stands by and books on his slate the number of articles each man repairs. If he does not do sufficient, Mr. Wilkins soon finds fault with him, and sometimes will not give a man his full complement of marks. One man specially attends to the 'goose oven,' makes up the fire, and takes hot irons to such men as require them, taking away their cold irons to be replaced in the oven. The squabblings and contentions that go on about the hot irons all day long are sometimes most amusing. When I first went there, a little red-headed 'professional thief,' known as Garibaldi, had the 'stove,' as his office was called. He was a Romanist, and always gave his fellow Catholics a preference before others in his supplies, which caused no end of contention.

On the opposite or right-hand side of the room, the next bay to the school orderly's was occupied by sewing machines, and the

next one to that by tailors, who did prison work, repairing cloth clothes and slops, and making up new ones. Always one, and sometimes two men were employed 'badging' the jackets. I have already explained that every man wears a certain badge and facings on his jacket to denote the class he belongs to. In a large prison like Dartmoor, there are always some changing their class in a regular legitimate way, by ending one year's imprisonment and beginning another. There are also always a great many reports; and mostly when a man is reported, as I explained before, a part of his punishment consists of losing his class for a certain period. This loss, and subsequent regain of class, entails the necessity of the man's jacket being rebadged twice.

The next bay to the two occupied by the prison tailors, and immediately opposite to Larry's bay, was appropriated by the man who superintended all the repairs of the prisoners' cloth clothes, as Larry did of their under-garments. He also arranged all the badging, cutting-out, and stamping the badges. A badge is a piece of cloth, cut into a round three inches in diameter, of a suitable colour to the class of the man. On this is stamped the letters 'P.S.,' penal servitude, at the top, below that the man's register number (29,830), which comes across the middle, and below the register his sentence (5) in figures. There was one sentence which was denoted without any figures, by the simple letter 'L,' life.

The facings consist of nothing for probation, three inches of black or yellow cloth one inch wide on each side of the neck and across the upper part of the sleeve at the cuff for 3rd and 2nd class, and a blue stripe one inch wide all round the collar and cuffs for 1st class.

The holder of this appointment when I arrived there was known as 'Gentleman Jem.' He had been a turf man, and I believe was well up in the three-card trick: a thin, sickly, cadaverous-looking young man. His duties were multifarious, but as I myself in time filled his office, I will leave a description of them till I come to my appointment. Before I left that tailors'

shop for a much better appointment, I filled no less than four different offices. I had Larry's shirt table, the prison cutting-bench—as the bay next to the bookbinders' shop was called—the stove to heat the irons, and the prison clothing table.

There were, in addition to all I have enumerated, two old sailors employed in making and repairing hammocks. On an average there were 100 men in the tailors' gang—sometimes 120—and there was a very considerable amount of work done by them. When the 'old women,' as the stocking-knitting gang were called, came to work there they brought their own assistant warder with them, but Wilkins took charge of the room and both gangs. Little Jemmy, the master-tailor, was a principal warder, as was also the master-shoemaker, and they were each 'Boss' over their own shops. Several times during the day the inside principal of the week would come in. Wilkins immediately saluted, and reported the number of men under his charge. This was repeated as often as he or any superior officer entered the shop. At the same end of the room as the door, standing at the top of the staircase, was the latrine, near the entrance of which stood an assistant warder, who searched every man before going in.

The men at work are supposed nót to talk, but a very great deal of conversation in a low tone does go on, and so long as a man does not neglect his work, and it is done in moderation, the officers seldom take much notice of it, unless they are in a bad humour. Sometimes Wilkins would say, 'Now then, not so much talking there,' or, addressing a man individually, 'Just you drop that chattering, will you; you have had a pretty good spell of it now, so get on with your work.' He was a man in wretched health, which at times made him more morose than usual; and I heard from those who were in gangs working at the barracks that his wife and children were the very dirtiest in all Princestown. I do not think the man was comfortable at home; his looks told it. It was said that, time after time, when he went home, no dinner was ready for him. When the bell rang, go he must, whether he had dined or not. If such was really the case, no wonder he was the morose man he was. He was never known really to smile. Once, I remember, the chief warder was passing through the shop just previous to his leaving the convict service, nearly two years after I had been there. He had been appointed

Governor of the Gaol at Trinidad, and it was known to the prisoners he was going. He was in the habit of walking through the shop two or three times a week, and this day a regular old reprobate named Smith, who was just completing his third 'lagging,' and was to be discharged in a week or two, addressed him:

'So I hear, Sir, you are made Governor of the West Indies. I suppose you will require a secretary and a walet de sham. I'm just agoing to lose my situvation here, on the fourteenth. I've given notice to leave; wouldn't I suit you?'

'I am afraid, my man, your character from your last place will hardly suit. You're too clever a long way for me.'

'Oh, but, Sir, I am sure I could please you; I should soon know your ways.'

'I've known your ways, Smith, a long time; know too much of them by far.'

A laugh went round the shop, and Wilkins tried his best to pay his chief the compliment of laughing too, but it was no use, he failed ignominiously. He got as far as a hideous grin, and there he stopped; it was not in him to get farther. That little incident was impressed upon my mind, for the next time I saw the chief was as I was about to pass him on the parade ground, coming out of chapel. He told me to 'halt,' asked me if I did not understand accounts—could I correspond—did I understand calculations?

'Yes, Sir, I understand them all.'

That day I received the best appointment given to a prisoner, and the week following the chief had bid farewell to Dartmoor to take up his new position in Trinidad.

But I am pushing on fast—too fast; for I am narrating events two years ahead, and have not yet completed my first day in the tailors' shop.

No sooner had I taken my allotted seat in the bay next to Gentleman Jem's than I was asked where I was from. 'Millbank.' Had I seen so and so, and that man, neither of whom I knew from Adam. I was located between a Welshman convicted or 'lagged' for passing 'shise coin'—bad money—and a young fellow who had commenced life as a Liverpool street arab, and, after 'cadging' about there till he got into trouble several times, had five years in a reformatory. He had done about four years more in short

sentences, varying from one month to one year, and was now in for seven years for robbing a captain of a ship when drunk. Both of these soon found out I was not at all one of their 'kidney,' but they treated me very well, and I learned a good deal of the various prison dodges and manœuvres from them.

A little before twelve o'clock the word was given by the warder, 'Throw down your tools,' 'Collect the scissors.' Instantly every man put down his work where he was sitting on the floor or form. One man in each bay collected the scissors, and, as the warder came round, handed them to him. He counted them to see all were there, according to the number booked in the morning as having been issued. When these were found correct, they were carried into Jemmy's room. All the irons had been collected and placed in the stove, and the fire banked up.

'Fall in, men.'

The men now fell into their places, but not in the order they had marched up from the parade-ground in the morning. Those located in No. 2 Prison fell in on the left; next to them those belonging to No. 4 Prison; and on the right the men living in the Association Rooms of No. 3.

'Front rank: two paces forward, ri—arch!'

Wilkins then proceeded to 'search' or 'rub down' the men of the front rank, and the assistant warder the rear rank.

By the time all were searched, the bell for dinner rang out loudly.

'To the right face—march! The men of No. 3 will go into their wards as they go downstairs. Steady there, no crowding,' is Warder Wilkins's order. The assistant warder leads the way, and off the men march to their respective prisons and halls. Here we found the other gangs coming in, and the stairs were crowded with men hurrying to their cells. Immediately on a man getting inside his cell out went his broom. The warder takes the roll, and each in turn calls out the number of his men to the principal in the hall below. This being all right the principal shouts—

'Dinner orderlies.'

The warders then open the doors of those four men who are the orderlies for the week. One goes at once to the sink where there is a can of water ready waiting. The three others run downstairs. A principal stands beside four large baskets of bread

and eight wooden boxes or trays, full of the dinner tins. One orderly, on a signal from the officer, seizes a basket of bread. The principal shouts out, 'No. 4. One man with bread.' Old Dicks is looking over the railing and replies, 'One man, Sir.' He keeps a sharp eye on that man to see he does not 'filch' a 'sixer,' as the six-ounce loaf, served with the dinner, is called.

So Numbers 3, 2, and 1 landings get their bread in like manner. Then follow the other two orderlies with one of the trays, which they place on the landing, and go down for the other one. While this is going on the assistant warder has been opening the cell doors, and as each man holds out his pint pot the man with the can fills it, and the warder hands in a six-ounce loaf of bread to the man, from the basket carried by the other orderly. By the time the bread and water are served the trays with the dinners are both up, and the men who have been carrying the can and basket seize hold of one tray, and the other two of the second. Dicks goes with one lot and the assistant with the other, and every man's dinner is handed in to him.

Now there is an hour, in which a man gets his dinner, rolls up his bedding, which the reader will remember he left hanging over the hammock in the morning, and puts it on the dresser shelf, unfastens his hammock, rolls that up too, and straps it tightly to the wall of the cell. Then, if he is a reader, he sits down with his books; if he is not a reader, he either goes to sleep or walks up and down his cell to the annoyance of the man below him most likely, or beats a devil's tattoo on the wall or table, to the equal annoyance of the men on each side of him. When I arrived in my cell the first day I found a Bible and Prayer-Book with hymns, a Nuttall's dictionary, and the 'Swiss Family Robinson;' also two tracts, and a long stick of slate pencil.

It is during the dinner hour that the Doctor goes his rounds, calling at the cells only of those men who have put their names down. It is the time also that the Governor tries those men who are brought before him on 'reports' by the warders for misconduct, and also gives audience to such men as wish to see him to make any request, and have put their names down in the morning for that purpose. The Chaplain also holds a similar levée. One great inconvenience of an interview with the Governor is, that you stand a good chance, if not of losing your dinner, certainly of

not having time to eat it, for very shortly after the dinners are served an assistant warder comes round and collects all those men who are to see either the Governor or the Chaplain, and he rarely gets back with them many minutes before the dinner hour is over, and all go out to work again.

The visit of the Doctor is in many, aye, most cases, nothing but a brutal farce. The Doctor, the apothecary, and a hospital orderly carrying a tray with a few bottles of medicines, and a hospital warder come round, attended by the principal of the prison on duty. The cell door is opened; the prisoner stands at the door and salutes the medico, who does not trouble to ask what is the matter: the man tells or shows what it is.

'I've sprained my wrist, Sir,' or my leg, whatever it may be.

Doctor looks at it.

'Give him some liniment.'

'Hold your hand,' shouts apothecary.

The man holds it out, and it is filled with some stuff—hartshorn and oil, or opodeldoc. The door is slammed to, and there stands the man, his dinner half finished, and his hand full of some filthy-smelling stuff, to make the best use of he can.

Perhaps instead of a sprain it is a sore.

'Give him some ointment.'

'Hold something to put it in,' shouts the apothecary. The man turns round to find something; apothecary cannot wait; so with his spatula he puts a dab of ointment on to the side of his plate where his dinner is. This actually happened to me; I never used my plate for dinner after that, but always ate it out of the tin it came in.

Men are given pills or castor oil, which they have to swallow there and then in the middle of their dinner. Fancy getting up in the middle of eating fat boiled mutton to take a dose of castor oil! If necessary, of course, a man was ordered to the infirmary. There, I believe, the Doctor was pretty kind to the men. Thank God, I never had occasion to test his kindness there! He was moved from Dartmoor to Pentonville, and I hear he is now dead; but if ever a man was misplaced he was—a round peg in a square hole. Instead of being appointed to a convict hospital, he should have been gazetted to a cavalry regiment as its 'vet.' The fate of the apothecary I will tell of shortly.

After dinner the warders return, the orderlies are called out, and the dinner tins are collected. Some men do not eat all their allowance, and return what they do not require in their tins. Others, again, would eat the rations of the whole landing if they had the chance. Sometimes these hungry ones will make a dart at a half loaf or a spare potato. If the warder sees him, the chances are ten to one he is reported—has three days' 'solitary,' with only bread and water, and loses a number of marks. I have seen Old Dicks more than once purposely turn his head away as we have approached a cell when I have been orderly and collecting tins. He knew what poor hungry devil was there—what he did not see he could not report. The man put out his tins, and almost before I could see him do it, the spare pieces, not from one tin only but from several, disappeared, and his cell door was closed. If he took too much, Old Dicks would mutter to himself in a half-audible tone, 'Greedy beggar; I shall look sharp after him next time.' That man did not get a chance for a long while of doing it again.

The trays and baskets are carried down by the orderlies to the hall below for the cooks to take away afterwards, they having brought them in a little hand-cart from the kitchens. If a man is discontented with his dinner, and thinks he has not got his quantity, he appeals to the warder. The officer takes him to the cook-house, when the dinner is weighed; if deficient, the quantity is made up; if it is all right, the man is reported and punished for giving unnecessary trouble. Some men do not care about being reported; they know they either have lost or will lose all their remission, and will have to serve their whole time. They therefore get callous, and will frequently complain about their dinner or the weight of their bread, for the sole purpose of annoying a warder and keeping him so long from his dinner, by compelling him to go with him to the cook-house.

When all is ready, the men go out to their work, mustering first of all on the parade ground, as in the morning. Shortly after four, scissors were collected, and the work knocked off, every man putting his work carefully away. Before the men left their seats, Wilkins called out the names of four men, and told them to 'sweep.' They immediately rushed to the latrine and got three brooms and a watering pot. The others in the meantime had fallen in and marched off to the exercise ground. The assistant warder remains

with the four sweepers. After watering the floor, it is carefully swept, and all the pieces of cloth, flannel, calico, and other materials, the 'cuttings,' are swept into a corner. I was surprised to see there was so much of this. About twice a week one of the hammock-makers puts it all into a coarse canvas cover, makes it up into a well-packed bale, and when there are some twenty or thirty of these bales, they are weighed, marked, and numbered, and taken up to the steward's store. From thence they are sent up to London by rail to a firm who contracts to take all the prison supplies. They have them sorted; the woollen are used for making 'shoddy,' and the cotton and linen for paper. It often struck me that the sorting of this 'waste' would have been far more profitable work for prisoners than oakum picking. In these days of iron ships, oakum is not in such demand as it used to be, and does not fetch the price. Were those waste rags carefully sorted by prisoners, no doubt but a very much better price could be realised for them by selling the woollen stuff to the Yorkshire shoddy men, and the other to the Kentish paper-makers. Government, however, or rather Government officials, have a queer way of doing business, and seldom make the most advantageous bargains, or the best of the means at their disposal.

I remember a very striking instance of the gross bad management displayed by two important branches of Government Service. Some twenty years ago I met a friend who was a very cute man of business, a North countryman, that I had lost sight of for some time; since that we had been connected in a transaction by which we both made money, but out of which he cleared upwards of £30,000. I asked him where he had been, and what he had been doing; for I knew perfectly well he had not been idle wherever he might have travelled to.

'Well,' said he, with a laugh, 'I have been teaching the Government to keeps their books by double entry.'

'How! What do you mean? Explain,' I asked.

'Oh, very simple. I was whiling away a little holiday at Chepstow, and, taking up a newspaper, I saw the Commissioners of Woods and Forests advertised a large quantity of oak timber for sale, to be cut in the Forest of Dean. This is strange, I thought; why it was only yesterday I saw the Lords of the Admiralty advertising for a large supply of oak timber. I turned over the few

newspapers on the coffee-room table at the hotel I was staying at, and there, sure enough, was their Lordships' advertisement. I read both requirements attentively. I started off to have a look at the trees the Woods and Forests were so anxious to get rid of, and saw at once they would just suit the naval people admirably. Entering into a few calculations—which you know don't take me very long —I found out some men at Lydney who gave me an estimate for cutting, lopping, and trimming the trees. I replied to both advertisements, tendered to both departments, relieved the Honourable Commissioners of the trees they did not know what to do with, and sold them to the noble Lords that conduct our naval matters. Why they could not have done this business themselves I cannot tell. I call that teaching them to keep their books by double entry.'

In a few words, these were just the simple facts, and I afterwards heard my wideawake friend cleared over £16,000 out of the transaction. He felled and trimmed the trees, and as fast as possible delivered them as oak timber at the different dockyards. Were there no folks sharp enough, either at Whitehall Place or the Admiralty, to have seen both advertisements or known the requirements and wishes of the other department? Could not the Woods and Forests have made the inquiry of the Admiralty, 'Do you want any oak timber, or shall you require any shortly?'

This is, however, wandering far away from sweeping up the tailors' workshop at Dartmoor. When this is done the men join the rest of the gang on the parade ground at exercise, and when the time arrives for going in, the usual search or rubbing down of the men takes place, and in we go again to our cells for another night.

When I went to Dartmoor I calculated exactly how many days I had to serve to complete my time. Reckoning upon obtaining all my marks, and losing none, every evening when I went in there was the satisfaction of reducing the number. I well remember the joy I felt when I first reduced the figures from four to three—999 days seemed ever so much shorter time than 1,000. Each time the leading figure was altered, and the hundreds were reduced, home seemed growing nearer. I offered up praises and thanksgiving for God's help so far over my weary journey; and the day I reduced it to two figures—actually less than 100—and I got permission to let my hair and beard grow, which every man

does three months before his time expires, my joy knew no bounds. No youngster in his teens ever so anxiously watched the sprouting of his first whiskers and moustache as I did mine, although they were getting tinged with grey. There were two occasions when I had to alter my figures the wrong way. I was twice fined forty-eight marks, and until the week was out, and I regained the old figures, my 'slate' used to look quite disgusting to me.

When the weather is very wet the tailors and other 'indoor' gangs do not exercise in the yard, but round and round their respective shops; and on Sundays, when it is too wet, the exercise takes place in the respective halls of the prisons, one landing doing so at a time.

After I had been there two or three days I was surprised by Old Dicks throwing open the door of my cell and saying 'School.' It was school night. Every cell door in the whole hall was open, and down in the hall itself were ranged rows of desks on trestles. I was told to take down my stool, slate, and pencil. Together with others of the new arrivals I was marched up to the head schoolmaster's table, where he briefly examined each man. Those not requiring his instruction he bid return to their cells. The rest he allotted to such classes as they were capable of joining. If a man cannot read or write, they do their best in one hour a week to teach him, and no man is allowed to enter the first class and enjoy its privileges until he can read and write. This first evening, however, I remained down, as I had the favour of writing home what is called my arrival letter, a similar privilege that was granted on arrival at Millbank. I understood that every time a convict is removed from one prison to another, provided he is on good behaviour and has lost no privileges, he is allowed to write to his friends within one month of his arrival. This letter is the only intimation his friends have of his having been removed; consequently, if a man is a troublesome fellow, or is under report and disability from writing, his family know nothing of his change of location. They can, however, at any time ascertain where he is, and if in health, by writing to the head office of the Director of Convict Prisons in Parliament Street.

As soon as I had finished my letter I went upstairs to my cell, but before doing so I took a survey of what was doing around me. Three assistant schoolmasters were at work, each taking a separate

class, and the grey-headed, grey-bearded head master walked about supervising the whole, and taking a ramble along the landings, chatting with those prisoners who needed no schooling. The school orderly attended on them all, seeing to supplies of pens, books, ink, &c. One master was teaching writing; another was dictating; and the third, with a blackboard and a piece of chalk, was doing his best to drum some simple rule of arithmetic into the heads of those whose education had been evidently neglected.

On school nights the Chaplain also shows himself, and walks round, looking into the cells of those men who welcome his visits, and chats for a few minutes with each. At Millbank there is a service of the Holy Communion once only in three months, and no man is allowed to attend till he has been six months in the prison. At Dartmoor there was a Communion regularly every Sunday, and the prisons took it in turns. Every man was invited to join by the Chaplain, who no doubt meant well, but I much question if his beating up for recruits in the way he did was judicious, as many men attended with the idea of carrying favour by so doing. Their conduct and language in many instances gave evidence that they had no real or sincere appreciation of the solemn and sacred service they took part in. Frequently very disgraceful scenes occurred, even in chapel, many of which have been related to me, and of one of which I was myself an eye-witness. I refrain from giving any account of these, as well as from repeating many tales I have heard from prisoners, which would only distress and shock the reader. It has been my sad experience to have met at Dartmoor with creatures in human form who seem to be of a different species to ordinary men. They are mere brutes in mind and demons in heart. Were I to attempt to give any description of them, their crimes in the outer world, or their conversation and acts within the prison walls, the reader would cast aside the book with horror and disgust.

The very worst of characters I have been brought into contact with have generally belonged to the class known as *roughs*, and the worst of all are *London roughs*. This class appear to me to be almost irreclaimable, and not at all amenable to any ordinary moral influence. As a rule, they are as cowardly as they are brutal—their animal instincts and propensities predominate to the almost total exclusion of any intellectual or human feeling, and

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with them, I fear, there is but one mode of effectually dealing. Brutes they are, and as brutes only can they be punished and coerced, and that is by the Lash.

I have, however, digressed from speaking of the Chaplain, from whom I did not have a visit on our first school night; but shortly afterwards he did call in at my cell. Though I did not agree with him on most points, yet I always found him most assiduous in his duties, very earnest, and a most obliging gentlemanly fellow. He was, however, a great stickler for rules, and on one occasion I felt he did not quite do his Christian duty in adhering too closely to the strict prison rules. The case was peculiar, and happened during the last year of my servitude, when I was not in the cells, but in the association rooms.

A young man with five years' sentence, who had been a cutter in a West End tailor's shop in London, was at the next table to me, and made me his confidant about many things. He had received a letter from his wife, a young giddy thing, who had not long before lost their only child. She had hitherto kept herself respectably with embroidery work for some house in Regent Street since his imprisonment, but the loss of the child had upset her considerably. A quarrel had taken place between her and her mother, with whom she had lived, and she had written to her husband saying she should leave her mother's and go into lodgings by herself unless she heard from him to the contrary. Unfortunately he would not be privileged to write for nearly four months. He was most anxious she should not leave her mother's house and go to live by herself, and he consulted me as to what was best to be done. I spoke to the Chaplain, and explained it all to him, though he knew pretty well all about it, having read the letters received by the young fellow from his mother-in-law. I pointed out the dangers of a pretty young woman—she was only nineteen and remarkably good-looking—leaving the protection of her mother's house to go into a lodging by herself, with her husband in prison, and not likely to be able to join her for two years.

'Yes, it is a very dangerous position,' replied the Chaplain, after listening to all I said, 'and a very wrong and foolish thing to do; but what do you wish me to do? What can I do?'

'There is only one of two things,' I replied, 'to be done, and you are the only person to do them.'

'What are they?'

'Back up a request of the young man to the Governor to be allowed to write now instead of fourteen weeks hence, when his time will be due.'

'Oh, I am quite sure,' said the Chaplain, 'any such application would be useless, and I should only be told not to travel out of my own duties and department.'

I must here inform the reader there was a coolness at the time between the Governor and the Chaplain, who did not pull well together.

'Then, Sir, will you write yourself to this young woman? Explain to her why her husband cannot write himself, and that he does not wish her on any account to leave her mother's house.'

'No, no,' he replied; 'that is against the prison rules, and I cannot do it.'

'Well, Sir, can you not strain a point, and in your private capacity, being in possession of the facts of the case, will you not just pen a few lines to try and save a giddy young creature from what I feel sure will be her ruin?'

'No, I cannot see it is my duty to transgress the strict rules of the prison. Good evening.'

'Good evening, Sir,' I replied, and saluted him as he departed. I could not but think he would have done a higher and more Christian duty by making the little effort I asked him, in sending that young wife a message from her imprisoned husband, than by so strictly keeping to the stern, hard rules of the prison. I was in hopes that, though he had refused to me to do it, yet, when he got home and thought of it and of his office to try and save souls from sinning, he might after all write a few lines to her.

But no, he did not, and the result was just what I anticipated it would be. She left her mother's. Many months went on and he had no letter. At last came a letter from her mother to him, saying she was living away from her, and had not been near her for a long while, and reproaching him for having married her daughter and then getting into prison. Before I left Dartmoor we heard of her living with a gentleman who was keeping her; and he, poor fellow, who was devotedly fond of her, began to get careless and was frequently in trouble. I fear when I left he was in a fair way to lose all or a great part of his remission. He was not

an habitual thief. He would not have taken to dishonest courses. His crime for which he was sentenced was embezzlement, and he belonged to that class for whom one 'dose' is quite enough. I cannot but think, had the Chaplain transgressed that one little prison law, he would have saved the wife from transgressing God's law and the husband from becoming a reckless man. After having lived in luxury 'under the protection' of a man who 'kept her in style,' what likelihood was there of her returning to her husband, a discharged convict? The last time I walked with him he expressed his determination to find her out and beg her to come back to him. Has she responded to his call?

All this time 'school time' has been going on in the hall below and after I had been up in my cell a little while, the head schoolmaster looked in and asked me if I had such a book to read as I liked. He very kindly gave me a slight insight into the contents of the prison library and recapitulated the principal rules. He and I became very good friends, and I always had my shelf well supplied with books. I found that many very useful books came under the head of school books, and I availed myself of several. I commenced the study of Spanish, the prison library supplying me with grammar, dictionary, and a reading book. I also brushed up a good deal of historical reading, and passed many an hour with Euclid. As I have already said, the library books are the convicts' greatest blessing. With the works of Macaulay, Froude, Napier, Agnes Strickland, Motley, Prescott, and others, a man may so while away an hour as to forget for the time the dreadful slave he is. I only hope, for the sake of the many men to whom these books are so inestimable a boon, and the really good effect they have upon the men, that no one will ever be cruel enough to rise in his seat in Parliament to move for their withdrawal.

The greatest nuisance to me, when I was deep in the perusal of some interesting book, was being called out to take my stool and go down into the hall below to have my hair and beard cut. This was a matter left pretty much to the young assistant warders, and I think they took delight in these petty annoyances, particularly when they saw they really did cause a man vexation.

Although they were so particular about cutting a man's hair, his nails might grow as long as a Chinaman's for aught they cared. In the tailors' shop we all of course had scissors, and with

a little manœuvring, a man could manage to get an opportunity to cut his toe-nails. The same applied also to the shoemakers, who used knives at their work; but to other men there was nothing else for it but to sharpen up their tin knives, and cut their toe and finger-nails with them as best they could.

Saturday evening was as busy a time with Old Dicks as it had been with Paddy at Millbank. On Saturday evening there was little or no reading. Clean clothes were supplied, which had to be put on at once, and the dirty ones put out. Soap, paper, candles, salt, rags, cleaning-cloths, bath brick, and whitening were all supplied. Men that had torn their clothes had to put them out, with 'tallies'—with their numbers and the numbers of their cells on—attached; the same with boots and shoes. New clothes, boots, shoes, and clothes that had gone the week before to be repaired were all sent 'home' on Saturday evening. The orderlies and the warders had a busy time in serving out the things, rectifying mistakes, &c. On Saturdays, too, every man had the loan of blacking and brushes to clean his shoes. All wore low shoes on Sunday. We tailors polished our boots too. The outdoor gangs all oiled their boots. The passing of blacking and oil tins under the doors of cells, taking them to other cells, giving out clean and new things, and collecting ragged and dirty things kept the warders and orderlies well employed.

At length the Sunday comes. The getting-up bell does not ring till seven, so we have an extra snooze in the morning. This to many of the 'bog-men' is a great comfort. Many of them sleep nearly the whole day. The bedding on Sunday is rolled up the first thing, and is not left open on the hammock.

After breakfast the early exercise takes place for an hour, and many men have an opportunity of meeting for a talk on that day that does not occur all the week. All the gangs, out and indoor, exercise this day, not in gangs, but in landings and prisons, so that one meets with another class of men, so to speak, and we insiders hear the news from the outside and bog gangs. It is all news in our little world, for we are shut in from hearing any from the great world outside.

After exercise, church parade is held. The men are all drawn up in close order in the hall. The principal of the prison and each of our own warders give a look over the men to see all are ship-

shape. Presently the principal shouts, 'Rear rank take two paces to the rear—march!'

'Attention!'

In walks either the Governor or Deputy, accompanied by the Doctor, chief warder, and the principal of the day; all along the front rank they pass from one end to the other, and then back between the ranks to inspect the rear men.

'Rear rank take two paces forward—march!'

'Stand at ease.'

They are gone to inspect some other prison.

If a man has one button of his jacket undone Captain B——, the Governor, would 'spot' it at once.

This man's whole time seemed to me devoted to dress, and he must have had unlimited credit with his tailor. I never saw a man in such a variety of costumes in a short time in my life. He was a good-looking man and a great dandy, but if you saw him three or four times a day he was dressed differently. He generally affected very broad-brimmed hats, but of all sorts, colours, shapes, and materials. Some of his neckties were brilliant in the extreme —splendid, in fact. His style was too much of what I fancy Mr. Mantalini's would have been had he lived now. He was the direct antithesis to his Deputy, Captain A——, who dressed once in the day, and it was perfection in fit, colour, tone, and style. Both left the prison in my time there. The Governor was transferred to Chatham, and I believe, but am not quite certain, the Deputy was promoted to Governor of Parkhurst in the Isle of Wight. Their successors were very different men from both of them.

After the Governor's Sunday inspection was over, those who were communicants were called out—if it was the turn of that prison to take the sacrament on that day. After church straight back to our cells were we marched, and presently the bread and cheese, our Sunday's dinner, was served out. I was greatly surprised, knowing what a deal of bad and indifferent cheese there is about, at the very fair, I may almost say good, quality of the cheese supplied to the prisoners.

On Sundays one-half the officials are off duty, and it is altogether a lazy day. In the afternoon, at three, there is another service at church. Some of the men go to their second exercise before, and some after church, and on returning from that it is a long

time to bed time, which has to be got through somehow. To myself and others with a good book, it was of course most enjoyable, so long as it was light enough to read. Unfortunately it did not always suit the warder on duty to let us have a light for our candles quite so soon as we thought them required. He could see better outside than we could inside the cells. To men who did not read, sleep was a great resource; to others, who neither read nor slept, the difficulty was to get it passed. Some would set to and polish all their things, others would carry on a conversation with their neighbours, while others again would indulge in a break-down, or cellar-flap dance, dreadfully to the discomfort of the men in the cells below.

During my first Sunday's walk I had several celebrities pointed out to me, one of whom was the well-known 'Jem the Penman.' Some of the Fenian prisoners were pointed out as great heroes.

'Do you see that tall man just now passing the civil guard?' said my walking companion, 'the second classer.' 'He's a ten-year man. That's the Duke of Devonshire. At least,' continued he, seeing I thought he was talking nonsense, 'it was because he was not the real duke that has brought him here. He flashed it about a good deal for a long time, going from one place to another. Sometimes he was a lord, at others an earl. He stayed in a place doing the grand and sucking the flats till the folks began to smoke him as not all there; then he shifted to another place and took another title. He's a doctor in his right business. One day he very unfortunately introduced himself to some place as the Duke of Devonshire. He hadn't posted himself in the fashionable intelligence of the local papers, or he would have seen his highness of Devonshire had actually been there—the real duke—a fortnight before. It was unlucky for him he couldn't of thought of some other place to be duke of instead of Devonshire. The landlord was a "fly cove;" he took his dukeship in, and sent down for an inspector of police at once. When once he was fairly caught, half the counties in England wanted the honour of trying and committing him, for he had been everywhere almost. They say he made a paying game of it, and knew how to turn the things into money that he obtained from the people, and that he has got a tidy sum put away dark somewhere against he's finished his time.'

I noticed the man—a fine-looking fellow, certainly—but not to my mind the one to make people think him a duke.

In the afternoon I was mated with another man, but quite as communicative. Until we were in the parade ground and on the march round we were not allowed to talk.

'You come down with the last batch from the Bank, didn't yer?' commenced my companion. 'Ah, I thought so. What's yer dose?' Looking on to my badge, 'Five, oh, you can do that little lot on yer 'ed easy. I've twelve this go. I did a lagging of seven and was at the Gib. three out of it. 'Ow did I like it? Only wish they'd send me there again. Why they serves you out 'bacca there reg'lar every week. I was servant to one of the officers, and had a blooming good time of it till the cholera came, and then I didn't care how soon they'd a sent me 'ome. Yes, I was frightened. You see cholera ain't like 'nother disease, it don't give a feller no time. Why, I've stood next a bloke in the mornin' at early muster, and a 'elped to bury him the same night. It's so blooming 'ot a chap must be buried at once, 'e won't keep. Oh no, I wasn't officer's servant all my time. It was only after the cholera cleared off a lot of prisoners, and soldiers too, and he couldn't get no one else, that he took me. Afore that I worked in the galleries, a making the casemates for the guns, and blooming hard work it was. We also made great tanks to 'old the water. Some of the chaps couldn't stand the 'eat, but I could; we weren't dressed in such togs as these 'ere, but had white canvas jumpers and trousers. Did anyone ever get away? Ah, I just believe they did, too. The Spaniards would always 'elp a bloke if he was once over the lines. They weren't like the blooming fellows about this place, who pounce on a poor devil and give 'im up directly, for the sake of the blooming five quid that the Government gives 'em. This 'ere Dartmoor is a blessed sight better than Chatham, I can tell you. There's many a bloke there as is druv to suicide, it's such a 'ell upon earth. One chap while I was there threw himself down in front of the engine as works the trucks of earth out of the new dock and was cut in half. He'd been bashed twice, and the blooming warder had been going on at him till he couldn't stand it no longer, and he ups with a pick and chucks it straight at 'un and 'it 'im on the shoulder, and then 'e see the engine a coming, so 'e saved 'em the trouble of bashing 'im again and chucked hisself

bang in front of it, and it soon settled 'im. The men are drove into being reg'lar devils by being constantly down upon by the blooming officers. Them as 'as any pluck in 'em turns savage, and them as 'asn't they knocks under, as I did, and gets ill, and lots on 'em dies. I got sent to Portland. Yes, that's better than Chatham a blooming sight. I was in the infirmary there after I'd been there a month, and there was that Member of Parliament, Roupell. He was 'ospital orderly, and a very good one too. What d'ye say? Who's that tall man standing at the latrine door? Oh, that's one of the cleverest gentlemen cracksmen out. 'E's been in some real good things 'e 'as. The blooming crushers were precious glad when they "pinched" 'im. 'E's been to France, to Paris, and over to America. I see we're a going in now, and I 'avn't time, but I could tell you some fine yarns about him.'

The reader will pretty well know by this time the daily routine of a convict's life, which I have endeavoured to describe with a minuteness I trust will not be found tedious, but with a view to lay such details before him as will enable him to picture to himself exactly what it really is, stripped of all romance.

Time wore on, and in due course the cold blasts of winter came upon us. In no habitable part of Great Britain is the severity of winter felt more than at Dartmoor. The snow has lain on the ground for weeks together, and many remember the day the poor schoolmaster was dug out dead from the snow, having perished in the storm which had overtaken him on his way from Horrabridge to Princestown. Sometimes the outside gangs cannot go out for days together, prevented by snow and fog. Rain we thought nothing of, as it mostly rained or drizzled, and the thick fogs soak everything through. The high ground of Dartmoor is the first to catch the clouds brought up Channel by the westerly winds from the Great Gulf Stream of the Atlantic. Notwithstanding it being so damp through the fog that even our bedclothes in the cells were 'beaded' with fog or dewdrops, and every wall in the prison streamed with water, the men generally were far more free from colds or rheumatism than I could have expected. The east winds, when we did get them, were severe in the extreme. If it was not absolutely raining we always exercised out of doors. We had no topcoats, not even 'slops'—nothing but our ordinary indoor clothes.

Our warders had both thick overcoats and waterproofs over them, and looked comfortable.

One day, while exercising, I was seized with cold in my inside, and was obliged to fall out. The wind was blowing from the east so bitterly keen, and driving before it a sharp cutting sleet, that at last the principal coming to the prison door ordered the warder to bring us in. Up to the shop the men marched: I crawled, and when there I was obliged to throw myself upon some bales of waste in perfect agony. Jemmy came up to me and asked what was the matter. He saw I was ill, and drew the attention of the other principal to me. He was a kind-hearted man in the main, though the greatest hand at 'blowing-up' in the whole prison.

Mr. Maltin told me to go with him and he would send me to the infirmary, and he very considerately, instead of taking me round the prisons across the yards exposed to the weather, led the way through the passages inside the prisons, till we had only a short distance over the infirmary exercise ground to go. Seeing an infirmary officer, he hailed him and gave me over to his charge. The reader will please to bear in mind what I was suffering from, cold in the stomach, and then he will be able to thoroughly appreciate the *humane* and sensible treatment I received.

On entering the infirmary, instead of going upstairs as I anticipated, I was ordered by the apothecary into a stone passage. Not one word was asked as to what was the matter with me, but I was simply told to strip, which I did, and stood bare-footed and naked on the cold stones, while the hospital warder quietly searched my clothes, with the apothecary looking on.

'What for?' asks the reader. It is the rule.

I dressed as soon as I could, and then asked if I could have anything.

'When the doctor comes.'

Two hours did I wait seated on a stool till the doctor did come. He saw me, and immediately ordered me what I required, and what the apothecary could have given me had he not been a brute; the doctor offered me to remain there for a day or two. I thanked him for his kindness, but on the plea of not losing my marks—for a man in hospital only gets six instead of eight marks a day—I said I would see how I felt in the afternoon, and, if possible, would return to my prison. The medicine he gave me comforted the

stomach, and the room being nice and warm, I gradually recovered. I most heartily thanked God that day for the blessing of a good constitution. Many men taken in the same way, and receiving such treatment, would have been seriously ill, and perhaps have died. I felt that if ever I went into that infirmary again, as a patient, I should never see my home. There was neither sense nor need to treat a man under such circumstances in such a way. Nothing but the most absurd routine, combined with sheer brutality, could have dictated it.

Some time afterwards I mentioned it to the chief warder, and he said the apothecary need not have stripped me at all, and promised he would inquire into it. The apothecary, I expect, 'heard of it,' as he took the first opportunity many months after to 'run me in' and report me, under the following circumstances:—

After I had been removed from the cells into the association rooms of No. 3 Prison, I was for some little while troubled with a cough; nothing of any great consequence, but what is known as a stomach cough. One day, when the doctor was coming round on his usual visit during the dinner hour, I asked him for a little opening medicine, saying what was the matter. He ordered it, and passed on. The apothecary, instead of giving me what I wanted, ordered the hospital orderly to give me two cough pills. These were of no earthly use to me, and I told him so, and that the doctor had ordered other pills.

'Nonsense. I know best,' he said.

'You cannot know my constitution as well as I do myself, and I know perfectly well what I want. A couple of rhubarb pills will do all I require.'

'We'll see if you know better than I do,' said he in a fury. Then, turning to the orderly, 'Take that man's number.'

'Here it is,' I replied, '29,830; be sure and take it correctly.' My monkey was up, and I felt savage. I felt indignant that such a brute should be in such a position. He 'ran me in' next day.

I went before the Governor, who told me I was reported for insolence to the doctor. I explained the case fully to him, and told him it was the apothecary, and not the doctor, I had spoken to. I was very anxious at the time, for I then held the best position in the prison, in the Clerk of the Works office, and I was fearful I might lose it. I saw the meanness of the fellow in endeavouring

to make out it was the doctor I had had the altercation with, and not himself.

The Governor turned to the chief officer, and I was sent back for a few minutes. When I was recalled he said,

'I find it was the apothecary you spoke to, and I am surprised you should have done so. It is men like you that should set a good example to the others in treating the officials with respect. I shall fine you 48 marks, and you had better be careful in future.'

Forty-eight marks! a week's remission. The very thought made me savage, but I blessed my stars I had not lost my class, or my good berth. I went back to my work, greatly to the satisfaction of the Clerk of the Works, who had found me a useful man to him, and was sadly afraid, when he heard I was 'run in,' he would lose me. I made up my mind I would 'sarve' my pestle and mortar friend out; and so I should have been able to, before long, in a very quiet way, which I could do I knew, as the time was coming round for his quarters to be painted, papered, and done up. A good deal of the arrangements of these sort of things really rested with me, as I gave out the papers for the walls. In stock we had all sorts, and among them some of the most hideous ever designed.

Many people may not be aware of it, but the colour and pattern of the paper on the wall of a room makes all the difference whether it has a bright, cheerful, homelike appearance, or is a gloomy room only fit to give one the horrors. You may go into a room covered with a light, bright, cheerful paper, and it strikes you at once as a pleasant chamber. A something pleases the eye at once, and gives a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction. You enter another room, perhaps in the next house, having the same prospect and exactly the same size, and are at once struck with a feeling of discomfort, and a consciousness that no furniture in the world would ever make it a comfortable or pleasant place to live in. You look out of the window. No, the prospect there is all right; examine the furniture, and try the chairs; they are comfortable and easy enough, but the eye is offended by the hideous staring wall-covering, and the place is spoiled. So I determined his quarters should be. I remembered having put on one side some pieces of the most frightful patterned paper I ever saw. It was not so much the pattern as the dreadful gloomy colours. I pictured to myself his sitting in his

room, after torturing poor prisoners all day, papered with that terrible paper, and full of the sufferings of a fit of blue devils. I might have saved myself all my uncharitable feelings. He never had his quarters done up. Instead of serving out room papers for him, I had to give out to the carpenter's shop a coffin plate and fittings.

It seems he was in the habit of taking every morning a 'screw' in the shape of a little dose of bitters to correct the effects of the last evening's festivities. At the public-house in Princestown the officers of the prison meet of an evening, and over their pipes and grog or beer relate the little incidents of the day, and crack their jokes about having served this man out, giving that man a job he didn't relish, and run some one else in. Some officers hardly ever had a comfortable dinner hour, as they had reports of some one or other every day, and when together in the evening boasted of their doings. So also did Master Apothecary; and I daresay he occasionally took what required a little 'screw' in the morning to counteract and enable him to pull himself together before going his rounds with the doctor. He mixed his own special bottle, and placed it in his compounding room. Either he did it himself by mistake, or some one, a prisoner or warder, who had a spite against him, for he was universally disliked, but at any rate the bottle was changed. It always stood on the shelf, at the end next the door, the first of a row of similar bottles. He came in one morning as usual, poured out his customary 'screw,' and swallowed it. A moment afterwards he called out, 'He's done for me; he's done for me; send at once for Doctor Howell.'

The doctor was sent for; the hospital warders and orderlies did what they could for him, or made a show of doing so. He rapidly grew worse; went into fits of contortions; and as the doctor entered the room expired, all drawn up in such a way as needed no examination of the bottle to find he had swallowed such a 'screw' of strychnine as would have poisoned twenty men. The first bottle on the shelf was the deadly bitter poison; the very next bottle was his own mixture. Both bottles were exactly alike, as all doctors' bottles are; the labels and contents alone were different. Whether he or some warder had accidentally misplaced and changed the bottles, or whether some one, prisoner or warder, had intentionally done it, He who knows all secrets alone can tell.

I believe there were plenty about the place who were quite capable of doing so, and there were many opportunities both for prisoners as well as warders for effecting such a change. Perhaps it may have been done to serve him out and give him a physicking, but with no deliberate intention of killing him. The room in which the drugs were kept was at the end of a large ward, and in full view of every bed and its occupant. Every prisoner in those beds must have seen him each morning take his 'screw,' and nothing easier than for some man to have slipped out of bed, night or day, and 'rung the changes' of the bottles. Suicide was spoken of, and I rather think the verdict was to that effect, but there were many good reasons to suppose that, unless it was pure accident, it was the work of some one he had angered by his usual brutal conduct, who had paid him off. I had all the particulars of his death from a man who was in bed in the ward at the time, and actually saw him take the fatal 'dose,' and all the confusion that followed till the moment he expired. I never heard anyone regret him, and when his successor came and took possession of his quarters I selected him as cheerful a patterned paper as I could, in hopes it might tend to keep him in a pleasant state of mind.

I have mentioned that one of my fellow-workmen in the tailors' shop was an old Liverpool city arab. He used to tell some amusing tales of his early life. He and other boys picked up a living how and where they could. When a troop of emigrants arrived at the railway station they would follow and mix themselves up in the throng, ready to filch any stray article they could lay their hands on. 'Germans afforded the best plunder. Irish never had anything but themselves and their kids to take.' At night they would leave the town for the suburbs, and when all was quiet, try all the larder and pantry doors and w ndows, and it was very seldom there was not something within reach a good meal could be made of.

'A long arm and a crooked stick,' said he 'would reach a long way through iron bars. We never troubled about the dishes: the grub was all we wanted. Once we had a rare blow-out at some swell's place at Aigburth. We saw there was a feed going on, and we knew the back outhouses well. The pantry was a little house outside. I saw the servants going about, for it was dark outside, and all lighted up first-rate indoors, so they could not see us

though we had got into the back garden and was a looking at 'em enjoying theirselves proper. There were three of us. We see all manner of good things being taken into this pantry, and our only chance was the door, as the window was not only iron-barred, but had that holey zinc stuff over it to keep the buzzers out from blowing of the meat. One of my pals proposed to go in and hide down behind the door. "What's the use of that, you blooming little fool?" says I, "they'll lock the door and fasten you in. I knows a better lay than that;" and so I creeps up in the dark shadow till I gets quite close, then down on my hands and knees I watched a moment till one of the servant girls had brought another load of grub out, and as she turned her back and went into the house I grabbed the key and so they couldn't lock it no-how. Well, we stayed very quiet in among the trees and laurels in the back garden till about two or three in the morning, when all the swells had gone away and the house was all quiet, and then we went in and had a tightener you may depend. All we wanted was some lush to make us happy. When we had eaten as much as we could, we got a towel that was there and we filled that full and then mizzled. We didn't go near Aigburth again for one while; the climate wouldn't have agreed with us. I daresay the coppers quite expected us the next night, and looked out for us. I hope none of them caught cold in waiting.'

Coppers, I may inform the reader, is slang for police.

The Welshman's particular 'lay' was the passing of bad money. He got supplies at a nominal price from the makers of 'shise coin,' and would 'plant' it where he could. At the time he was 'pinched' he was acting as potman at a public-house in the outskirts of London, where they had a skittle-ground much frequented by the better class of workmen. Every man who paid him for beer or other drink that required change he would palm upon him a sixpence or a shilling—a tanner, a bob, or half-a-bull, according to what coin he gave to be changed. On a Saturday night he would 'plant' 3*l*. to 5*l*. of bad silver in this way. At last there was such a lot going about, and the shopkeepers began to detect it so often, that some men got into trouble, and were taken up on suspicion. After a while, some man, cuter than the rest, discovered the fact that the bulk of it came from the men in a large engine shop close by. The police were put on the scent.

One Saturday afternoon just before the firm paid their wages, they were waited upon by an inspector in plain clothes and a man from the Mint. The matter was explained to them. The money they had received from the bankers to pay wages was thoroughly examined, and all found 'up to the mark.' The men were asked where they generally first changed their sovereigns into silver; where they first went to and spent a part of their money.

The 'Duke of Wellington.'

From there the man from the Mint strolled in to the 'Duke,' but not with the inspector—he was known too well for that—but with another 'gent.' First they went to the bar and had a drain, tendered a half-sovereign—'half a quid,' he called it—and took up the change, turned it over, and that was all right. They then looked round and saw the busy potman running in and out with the pots of beer and glasses, and followed him and some workmen into the skittle-ground. Here they called for some beer, paid for it with a sixpence, and sat down to look on at the game. After several men had received change for quids and half-quids from the potman, they smelt a rat. Following a man who was leaving with the change out of a half-sovereign, one of the two stopped him at the door, and asked him if he could oblige him by allowing him to see the change the potman had just given. At first the man refused, but on the 'gent' explaining, in a few words, his reason, he did so, and, sure enough, were a 'shise' half-bull and a 'duffing' tanner: half-a-crown and a sixpence quietly palmed off on this man out of his half-sovereign. Calling to a policeman outside, the 'gent' asked them both to follow him, and meeting the busy potman—our Welsh friend—grabbed him at once. There he was with a heap of 'shise' upon him. He was caught, but they knew very well that he did not make it himself; so they tried all they knew to find out where his supplies came from. They got a clue, through the landlord, of a little girl, the Welshman's niece, who very frequently came to see him, and kindly inquired after his health. She was traced, after two or three days, to a very respectable street of small houses, in the north of London, but too late. The people had left in a hurry, and had forgotten to leave any address; but the man from the Mint saw quite enough to convince him there had been a very nice little business done there in supplying much more 'shise' than our

Welsh friend, or two or three more like him, could have got rid of.

I ascertained while at Dartmoor that a very large 'business' is done in 'shise.' What with electro-plating and most perfect tools and dies, combined with really skilled labour, spurious silver is now turned out in such perfection, that until it has been in use for some time it is most difficult to detect it. There were a great number of men in for 'smashing,' and two or three actual coiners.

I one day asked the 'Liverpool arab' what Larry was in for. 'Slinging his hook' at church, was his reply. 'His "lay" was St. Paul's and the swell churches and Exeter Hall. He'd tog himself up in black, with a white "squeeze," on Sunday, and go to two or three different churches, where he did a tidy thing now and then. He'll tell you all about it if you ask him.'

I got with him one day at exercise, and he confirmed the arab's account of him.

'I have heard all the popular preachers in London,' said he; 'and except when the May meetings were on at Exeter Hall, I never went crooked any other day but Sunday. St. Paul's and the Abbey are the best places. Folks stare about at the monuments in coming out, and then it's easy work. You see every man has his own particular lay. Some go to races, some to theatres, others railway stations; but I always stuck to the churches and chapels, and I never went to one place twice within a month. I have heard every preacher in London where there's a crowded congregation. You never make a great haul like you can at a racecourse or a rail station, but still a very good thing is to be done, and a man may earn a living.'

Here was a man speaking of pocket-picking and earning a living as if it was a recognised and legitimate trade. He told me a great deal of who he considered the best preachers, and discussed their different styles; also about High and Low Church; but there was nothing either interesting or edifying in anything he said. He was a very ordinary type of the London pickpocket.

Old Smith, the man I have already alluded to as offering his services to the chief warder as secretary or *valet de chambre*, really was a most amusing old fellow, though fearfully coarse. He was by trade a maker of some delicate and intricate tools or articles used by the Spitalfields silk manufacturers in what is termed

'throwing' the silk, and was a most skilful and excellent workman. He could, if he chose to be honest and steady, earn from 3*l.* to 4*l.* a week, and had received an offer from some silk firm, when he came out of one of his former laggings, to go abroad for them; but, unfortunately, honest courses were too slow for him. He vowed, however, that this time he *would* go to America, where he knew he could get good wages, and try to be satisfied with 'straight' work.

He seems to have availed himself of the services of the fair sex, and always had some woman living with him who worked with him in one or other of his dishonest ways. Once, when he was speaking of 'his old woman' for the time being, I asked if she was a 'crooked' one too.

'Oh, yes,' he replied; 'I never had nothin' to do with any "moll" who couldn't cut her own grass.'

'Cut her own grass! Good gracious, what is that?' I asked.

'Why, purvide her own chump—earn her own living,' the old man replied.

He spoke of this particular lady with great regret, and as having been quite a proficient.

'I used to go with her as "stall." Don't yer know what a "stall" is? Why, to be convenient, handylike in the way to stow the "foulcher" when she's nobbled it. Lor, she were a rare un! I've know'd her just walk in at one door of Swan and Edgar's and look at a thing or two, and come out with a foulcher, with flimsies and couters for a score of quid in it. She *were* a fine woman, and togged like a lady right up to the knocker—I never did meet with the like of her. We once went together to Cowes regatta, and blessed if going over in the steamer from Southampton if she didn't lift a swell of his russia with flimsies for 300*l.* in it. She gave me the office, and I soon had it. She returned at once in the next boat, and I quietly walked about till another one started, and in the meantime took a chance to overhaul what she'd nobbled. What! try it on to sling my hook after a few foulchers and tickers when I knowed I'd 300 quid safe?—not I. I went into a public, and slipped away to the rear; there I opened the swell's russia, took out the sweet little flimsies, and stowed them safe; then I got a few stones off the beach. As we was a-going back in the boat to Southampton I quietly dropped a little parcel over

for the fishes. It was the swell's russia—a russia, you know, is a pocket-book—with them there stones off the beach to take it safe down to the bottom. They sort of things are very dangerous to keep. What did I do with the flimsies? Well, I'll tell you. I went straight up to town by the first train, and soon found out the old woman. When I told her there was 300 quid she *was* pleased. I proposed we should go and have a booze. Not a bit—she wouldn't even let me smell a drain more than I'd had We went down to a bloke I knew up in one of the streets leading off the Euston Road who did a little on the "cross" now and again, to see what he'd stand for the 300*l*. He offered 200*l*. Well, as it was her catch I thought as I'd consult along of her whether we should take the 200*l*. "No," says she, "we've got some more besides that, and enough, too, to take us to France. Blowed, old man, if we don't go to Paris, and there we can get 300*l*. for them." Well she could do the French's patter, as she'd been there afore, when she was living on the "square." She were a she-flunkey, lady's maid, once—that's how she know'd all about being a swell lady. Oh, she was a buster too! Well, we started next day, after shutting up the crib where we hung out, and we did very well in Paris for two months. I came across some English sporting blokes as was attending on some swell cove's race-horses over there for their races, and we had a blooming fine time of it; but I wanted to get back; I'd had enough of foreign patter and ways, so I told the old girl we'd best hook it. She'd a-stayed on if I'd a-let her, and I'm blooming sorry I didn't; for the very next day as we got back to London she went up to some of the swell streets at the West End to see another moll, a pal of hers, and they went somewhere together. Well, when they was in a shop this pal of hern got slinging her hook after a swell moll's ticker, and made such a blooming hash of it that she was bowled out at once. They called in the coppers, and some feller in the shop twigged my old girl as one he'd a-seen before, and blessed if they didn't identify her as having lifted some things out of the shop, and she was pinched for seven "stretch." Ah, she was a stunner, too, she were! I were sorry for her. No, I never see her again. You see when her time would have been up I was doing my ten, and of course a moll like her would not be long before she'd get another bloke to take up with her.'

I once asked Smith if he was ever married, for somehow we frequently got paired and walked together.

'No,' he replied, 'I never took to a moll except on tally. When one or other of us gets tired we can hook it. I once had a old woman as lived with me for two year, and she were an out and outer in going into shops on the filch. It was when them big crinolines was wore. She'd smug a whole piece of silk and stow it under her petticoats and walk off as easy as I'd swallow a glass of "tape." Don't know what tape is? Why, gin. She'd a crinoline made on purpose; it had a strong leather belt round the waist, and the first three rows of steel hoops was very strong, and joined to the leather belt by strong steel bands. These here bands and hoops where they joined each other had a sharp strong hook underneath. There were an opening in her skirt somewhere frontways, and anything she once put her grapples on she slipped inside and hung it on one of the little steel hooks and walked off. Didn't it show? Of course it didn't—it hung down inside the hoops and never show'd a morsel. I've gone and met her to take the stuff, and she has had four and sometimes five things hanging there, and toddled along as if there was nothing but herself inside her togs.'

CHAPTER IV.

DARTMOOR.

After I had been at Dartmoor about six months I was one day sent for to the chief warder's office. On entering he informed me that a gentleman had come down from London to see me on some matters of business with which I had been an interested party before I got into the terrible mess that brought me to ruin and Dartmoor.

He took me into the Receiving Room, where I and the thirty-nine others from Millbank had undergone our examination *en buffe*. Here I was very grieved to have to meet a man I had known when occupying a respectable position in the outer world. To be seen in my degraded dress, cropped and shorn, by a man I had last met

under such different circumstances was a trial I did not care for, and would have avoided if I possibly could, at almost any cost. It made me feel afresh the terrible fall in my position, and reopened the wounds in my troubled heart. I dreaded he would express pity and sympathy for my troubles and position, and my soul perfectly revolted at the bare idea of being pitied.

My visitor was a gentleman and a man of tact, and I think he guessed my feelings, for he never, in the slightest way, alluded to present circumstances, but, meeting me as of old and shaking hands, explained at once the purport of his visit. He at once plunged into all the intricacies and details of an extensive and complicated matter of business in which I had been jointly interested with other parties at the time of my trouble and disgrace. The chief warder was present the whole time, though he behaved excessively well, and kept so much in the background that I entirely forgot he was in the room. I think my visitor hardly noticed his being there; yet he was an attentive listener, and for the first time he knew I was a different class of man from the usual run of those under his charge.

After my visitor had departed, the chief warder entered into conversation with me, and very kindly offered to do anything in his power, compatible with his duty and the prison rules, to put me in a better position. He asked me if I would like to go into the infirmary as a hospital orderly, explaining that I should there have many opportunities of getting better food. I thanked him very much, and, declining to accept that, I asked him—

'Would you allow me, Sir, to take the shirt-board in the tailors' shop? The man Larry is going away in a month, as his time is up, and I should like that better than mending prison clothes.'

'Yes, you can have that, no doubt,' he replied. 'I will speak to the master-tailor about it at once.'

He was as good as his word, and very promptly too. That visit was a most fortunate thing for me, as it made the most powerful man in the whole prison my firm friend.

The reader will already have gathered from what I have said that the Governor, Captain B——, was but a popinjay in office. He had as much to do with the management of the prison as a Russian cavalry colonel has to do with the navigation of the man-of-war he is, through Court interest, appointed to the command of,

The chief warder was everything here, and was a man quite capable of ruling all under his charge. He was a soldier and a strict disciplinarian, but was very just; and, although I know men disliked him, and especially many of the officers, yet everyone respected him. Captain B——'s whole time being devoted to his toilet and other amusements, he left the work of the prison to do itself. Luckily there was an efficient man as chief warder. I do not think the deputy, Captain A——, quite liked the whole practical direction of affairs being left to the chief; but if he had put himself forward and asserted more authority it would have had the effect of putting his superior officer, Captain B——, in an awkward position. He was a vigilant man himself, and, though he said so little, nothing ever escaped him. He evidently saw that the chief was an admirable administrator, and that everything under his management went on efficiently and well. Had they not have done so I believe Captain A—— would have very soon taken proper steps that they should. The higher authorities were quite aware both of how matters were going on and of the value of the man who was chief warder, and when he was appointed to the governorship of the gaol at Barbadoes they could not have selected a better man. Just before he left for the West Indies Captain B—— was removed to Chatham, and a man appointed in his place who needed no one to rule for him, but was as efficient a man as the chief. He at once took his position, and I think it was a lucky coincidence that the West India appointment turned up just at the right time, as perhaps the chief would not have liked to have had a governor over him who asserted his own authority, after so long having ruled supreme. He was a good disciplinarian and a soldier, and he may very likely have quietly fallen into his position of subordinate and matters have gone on pleasantly; but then he may not have done so; so it was a good thing for all parties his being appointed to Barbadoes. Evidently the new Governor, Major H——, approved of his lieutenant's system, as he made no changes.

The successor to the chief was a very different man. He came from Chatham, where he had been noted as a bullying principal. He was always shouting to some one, and very fond of trying to say funny things and make jokes. What the prison would have been with him and Captain B—— together I should be sorry to

predict. Luckily Major H—— looked sharp after everything, and the discipline of the place was kept up. It was not long before every man in the prison, officers and men, had a very wholesome respect for the Major ; while the new chief warder was more often spoken of as 'Sam' than by his official title.

I said the chief must have lost no time in speaking to Jemmy, for the very next morning when we went up to work I was called into the cutting-room.

'Oh, I want to promote you,' said Jemmy, with one of his laughs. 'That man Larry is going away soon, and I think you had better go over to his bay and help him, and then you will learn the duties and be able to take his board. Do you think you can manage it ?'

'Yes Sir, I am much obliged to you, and have no doubt I shall be able to do all that is required.'

No little commotion and buzzing took place throughout the whole shop as Jemmy walked me up to Larry's table.

'Here, Larry, here's a man to help you with your work. You seem to be growing your feathers, and as soon as they're long enough I suppose you will be flying away ; so let this man know all about taking your work when you go.'

Wilkins stared with all his eyes and then relapsed into his usual dreamy sullenness. I expect at least a dozen men who had intended to ask for the billet were disappointed, and the whole gang were surprised. I was about the very last man they all thought would have been appointed.

'Well, you worked that little fakement in a blooming quiet way, I'm blowed if you haven't,' said my late neighbour, the arab, when I went over to the bay to get my needles, thimbles, &c.

No one had the very remotest idea of the real state of the case, and little suspected, when the chief warder marched through as usual and passed me at the board without even turning his eyes in my direction, that he was the real motive-power that had worked the little oracle and transferred me from one side of the room, in a constantly sitting position, to the opposite side, where I could stand, sit, or walk about pretty well as I liked. I appreciated and enjoyed the change greatly, and I am quite sure my general health benefited by it.

I found there was plenty for me to do, and before Larry had

been gone ten days I began to discover there were many little disagreeables connected with the appointment. The men would scamp their work; and when I took upon myself to find fault and to reject articles, returning them to be properly done, they were neither blessings nor compliments I received. I was quite aware, from the difference of the work brought in by some men in Larry's time, when first I went to the table, and what they brought to me, thinking I should pass anything, that it was just a try-on. Their unparliamentary mutterings did not affect me in the least, and when they found I meant to do my duty in the position they gave it up as a bad job. A man brings in say a dozen or fifteen shirts as repaired. I look them over and either pass or reject them. If I pass any that are not properly done—one or two places not mended, a button or two missing—the deficiencies are sure to be discovered when they are sorted and rolled up into bundles in the washhouse, and back they would come with complaints. There is no possible means of telling who repaired them. Every mother's son of the men would stand out till he was black in the face that he never saw the shirt; I had no excuse that I did not examine it. So as soon as they found I meant what was right they desisted, and we all went on smoothly.

Among my shirt-menders I had both the Reverends that came from Newgate with me, and about a month or two after Larry's departure a very noted character was removed from Portsmouth to Dartmoor, and was introduced one morning into the tailors' shop to be set to work darning stockings. This was an old Jew, over seventy years of age, named Moses Moses. I found that all or nearly all the professional thieves not only knew him by sight but to speak to, and many of them had in former days 'done business' with him. They spoke of him as 'Old Mo,' and seemed to look up to him with a certain amount of awe and respect, like the subjects of a deposed and exiled monarch.

He had been a notorious 'fence'—one of the most extensive purchasers of stolen goods in London. The seizure of his warehouse in the neighbourhood of the Minories some of my elder readers will doubtless remember, also his trial and sentence to twenty years' penal servitude—a sentence he will, I hardly expect, ever live to complete, though he was a hale, hearty old fellow, and his mother, nearer to 100 than 90 years of age, was then alive,

His great grief was the idea he should never see his mother again. I have walked with him several times and found him a very intelligent old fellow and very civil, but he knew at once I was not one of his 'children,' and I could never get him to speak of any matters connected with his particular line of business. To others, those whose banker and 'consignee' he had been in the outer world, he would chatter gaily and enter with great gusto into the details of some cleverly executed 'bit of business,' or 'bilking the blues,'—evading the police.

Many changes used to take place in the tailors' gang. If men did not conduct themselves properly, Jemmy had a very quiet way of relieving himself from any trouble with them. He simply applied to the chief warder, and the contumacious prisoner was transferred to one of the gangs on the bogs. Men would themselves sometimes request to go to out-door labour for a time, particularly in summer, finding the confinement of the 'shop' too much for them. Others again, belonging to outside gangs, would 'interview' the chief warder and beg to be placed in the tailors' workshop.

One day, among a batch of new men brought into our gang, I noticed a celebrated 'gentleman cracksman,' and in the same batch came up another man, a tall cadaverous-looking fellow, whose case created considerable public excitement at the time. He was convicted for stealing some valuable rings and other articles of jewellery, belonging to a noble marchioness, at a fashionable West End hotel. I never had any chance of speaking to him, and therefore did not hear from him any version of the affair, but from the prisoners I heard that he always anathematised her ladyship as a jilt, if not something worse, and stated the rings were given to him as a *gage d'amour*. He was a very little while in the tailors' shop before he was received into the infirmary, and shortly after his admission there, a hospital warder, coming to my table for an old shirt, told me he was dead, and I looked out, from among a lot of shirts I had put on one side for condemnation and tearing up, one which was used for the poor fellow's shroud.

I one day asked a man who had the reputation of being a most expert hand at 'slinging his hook,' or picking pockets, as well as doing the three-card and other tricks of a similar kind, if the hard work of prison did not spoil his hands for delicate manipulations.

'Oh, bless you, no!' he replied; 'a few bread and water poultices, followed by wearing well-greased gloves, will set that all to rights. In a week or two a man can bring his hooks and feelers into full working trim again and no mistake.'

After I had been a few months at the shirt-board, I had been engaged in sweeping up shop with three others, when Jemmy came out of his cutting-room and called me to him.

'Do you think you could manage to cut out prison clothes from patterns? Daniels has got into trouble, and is "run in." He's sure to be sent on the bogs. If you think you can do it, I will promote you to the job.'

Jemmy always called it *promoting* a man when he removed him from one work to another. Sometimes his promotion had a downward tendency, instead of upward.

I told him I would try, and had no doubt I should succeed.

The next morning little Daniels did not appear. He had been walked off to No. 1, the punishment cells. I took up my position at the prison cutting-board, and my old place—the shirts and repairs—was given to one of the Reverends—Stanley, the one who drew too many cheques.

My duties now consisted of cutting out prisoners' clothes of every description, of which a large number are made at Dartmoor for the other convict establishments, where they have only small tailors' shops for repairs. I also 'fixed up' the trimmings, linings, &c., for the best work on the board, consisting of officers' uniforms and new clothes for prisoners on discharge, all of which Jemmy himself cut out.

When the second winter was coming round, and on one of the first 'severe' days, I saw my old friend A., who was working in Sergeant-Major Dicks's gang, dragging away at the cart, coupled to it, with several others, like cattle. I made an opportunity to speak to him and say, 'Why do you not try and get into the tailors' shop before the winter. See the chief and ask him.'

In about a week's time it was with no little satisfaction that I saw him march up and join our gang on parade, followed by an assistant warder, who called to our officer, 'Mr. Wilkins. One man!'

'One man, Sir, all right,' replied the gloomy warder; and that morning A. was put to shirt-mending. I need not say we got

together in walking as soon and as often as we could. We compared notes, and endeavoured to console each other under our great trouble. As soon as Wilkins saw that we sought each other's company, he did all he could to frustrate our getting together, and very frequently—too frequently, I am sorry to say—succeeded.

There was an old man, about sixty, among the shirt-menders, who had for a long while attracted my notice. He was a remarkably handsome man, and had a certain manner with him that was rather aristocratic. A. and I both named him the 'Earl.' He might have been taken for an old nobleman. When, however, I came to speak with him, the illusion was instantly dispelled. His language dispelled the illusion created by his appearance. He had formerly been gentleman's servant and butler in many situations, and after a time became one of a gang who practised with the 'Broads' card-sharping and the 'confidence-trick.' He had always been the decoy bird. Got up in faultless style, he, no doubt, looked quite the old country gentleman, with his fine forehead and bald head, grey hair, and most perfect aquiline nose; his profile, in fact, was as fine as one would wish to see. He used to get into situations as butler, &c., on false characters, to sound a place with a view of 'putting up a good thing,' in the shape of a robbery by others with whom he was in correspondence. He had also travelled on the Continent with a family with the deliberate view of arranging with confederates for the robbery of their luggage, or such portion of it as contained jewellery and valuables; but he said no chance ever occurred 'at a right place.' He told me one day that there was one thing he had done that had haunted him day and night since, and lay very heavy on his conscience. It was a heartless, cruel robbery on his part, and had brought ill-luck on him ever since. Before that occurred he had never been in 'limbo.'

In one of the western suburbs of London he fell in with an old pensioner, near on to eighty years of age, who had been that day to receive his quarter's pension of 5*l.*, on which he and his old wife managed to live, with a little help from a married daughter. Temple—that was the old Earl's name—says the devil tempted him to get the old man's five pounds. He did not want it. He had plenty of money just then, having done well with his pals just before at some of the great races.

'It was the devil, I'm sure,' said Temple, 'and nothing else, that got hold of me that day. I fell into conversation with the old chap, who told me his missus was waiting at home for him to bring the money; that he never spent any on his way home, but took it to her just as he got it, and then they had a quiet little treat together for their tea on the strength of its being pay-day. He said they had to be very careful to make it last out, as, after all, it wasn't much for two old souls to grub along in this world with. Well, I was determined to ease the old boy of his blunt; so I asked him to come and have a drain, and we went into a house and sat down. Then I got him into conversation, and asked him if he was sure he had his money all safe. "Oh, yes," he said. "See, here it is," and pulled out an old bit of a leather bag and showed me. That was all I wanted. I'd several sovs—good ones—with me, and also a whole lot of "duffers." I always carried—to look like plenty of cash—little things like whist counters, with a Queen's head on one side, and looking just like sovereigns.

'The old boy's hands were very shaky, and the glass I had stood him, and which he wasn't used to, made him a bit sleepy, and he fumbled at doing up the bag; so I offered to do it for him. I did. I palmed his sovs into my pocket, and gave him five duffers in their place. I showed him they were all right, and counted them and did up the purse, which he carefully stowed away in the bottom of his breast-coat pocket, where, also, he had all his papers to show he was the right man to receive the pension. Then we came out of the house, and I left him at a corner of a street, standing by a post and with his face turned towards his home. An hour afterwards I was sorry I had done it. It was such a heartless thing. I fancied the old people finding the five shiners were only duffers, and tried to think how they would get on till next pension day. I never thought to ask the old chap where he lived, or I would have gone back and given him his money again. I thought of going to the neighbourhood and making inquiries, but then I fancied he might have made his loss known, and be looking about with a copper. I might be pinched, so I didn't go; and it has played the devil with me ever since, for I have never had any luck, and it has haunted me day and night. I wake up sometimes and see the old chap standing at the foot of my bed as he did at the post.'

I believe that Temple was perfectly sincere, and that he bitterly

and sincerely repented of his past life, and more particularly the robbery of the old pensioner.

I heard from him a good deal about 'putting up.' It is quite a system, and most artfully carried out. A certain house is supposed to be worth 'cracking.' To do this it is necessary to know all about it, not only what amount of plate or other valuables there may be there, but where it is kept, the habits of the family, and who they consist of. A plan of the house is necessary also, and perhaps even duplicate keys. All this information can only be obtained from some one who is a resident in the house. One way is for some fellow to make love to one of the women servants, but the best plan, and that most usually pursued, is to 'plant' some one into the house if possible: to get either a man or a woman engaged as servant, who can 'work' it properly. There are quite as many women in these things as men. False characters are easily managed. A very short residence in the house will tell Maria or John Thomas if the 'thing is to be done or not,' also if the 'swag' is worth the trying for. Sometimes it will take months before it can be perfectly worked, before the party, man or woman, working it, can get the opportunity of seeing and knowing all they want. Some people keep their plate-chests in a bedroom. Here John Thomas cannot very well get access to it, unless he gets over the housemaid, so that it is necessary to get a woman into the house.

Many months are sometimes occupied in the details of a good 'put up.' It has to be as systematically set about and carried on as the siege of a town. When the time arrives, and all is prepared, it comes to be an important question whether the servant, after getting all the information, plans of house, and perhaps impressions of the keys, from which duplicate ones are made by skilled hands, shall remain in the house at the time the job is done, or shall leave previously; if so, the leaving must be brought about in a way not to excite suspicion. Parties who go into a situation for this special service are invariably 'scrupulously honest.' They never, in fact, spoil a good game by being tempted into taking anything that may be lying about. The inmates never lose anything by pilfering, and they get to have great confidence in the very servants who are scheming and diplomatising all the time for a fitting opportunity to 'clean them out.' If the reader will call to mind such details as come to the public knowledge of most of the great

robberies, he will see that the thieves have taken copy from their enemies the police, and have always acted in consequence 'of information I received.'

Of late years there have been several jewel robberies; some from the house, and some from the luggage at the railway stations. How is it possible that the thieves should know exactly the hour when My Lady and her guests should be at dinner; and the bedrooms all empty, with the valuables lying ready to hand? How is the party 'operating' to know *which* of the boxes, bags, or portmanteaus it is among the piles of luggage on the railway platform, that contains the precious booty? We seldom read of a robbery of one or more packages at a railway station, from a lot of luggage, the contents of which are valueless, and of the dressing-case or the portmanteau containing it, in which My Lady's diamonds are snugly ensconced, being left behind. No, no; before the thieves 'sling their hooks,' they make quite sure of which is the fish worth hooking. I have asked men the question, Are not some of you known to the police? 'Yes, some are, but then a policeman never interferes till something has been done; he cannot very well take a fellow up on suspicion.' No; but he can put people on their guard. When do we ever read of the police preventing a robbery—*never*. During the weeks or months that the siege is going on, the plans are working, do the police ever 'drop upon' the parties and frustrate their plans? Even if they have a suspicion they seldom or never act upon it, or put the victims on their guard. They can be active enough in hunting down a poor fellow who, with a 'licence,' as a ticket-of-leave is called, is trying hard to get a living by honest means, and so drive him into dishonest courses.

There was a young fellow told me once that he left prison with a year's licence from a former lagging, and he tried all he could to work 'square.' His wish was to be honest, but the coppers or police would not give him half a chance. At every place he got into work they were down on him. A policeman would call on the employer, 'Do you know you are employing a discharged convict, Sir? So-and-so in your service is a ticket-of-leave man.' In nineteen cases out of twenty the servant either gets immediately discharged, or quietly receives notice the next day that his services will not be wanted.

The young man I speak of lost several places in a similar way.

At last he made up his mind he would try his luck in America, but he wanted a few pounds for his passage. While thinking of this he saw a gentleman whose watch temptingly offered the means of his emigrating. He listened to the tempter, 'filched the ticker,' and was nailed almost immediately. Previous conviction was proved, and he got ten years.

If the police would leave a ticket-of-leave man alone, so long as he was working, or trying to work honestly, a great number would never return to evil courses. By all means let the detectives keep such a man under their eye, and watch him if they like, but don't turn him out of his honest employment. They can very soon know if he is going 'cross' or 'square.' Nothing is easier than to know who his companions are. A man intent on being honest will shun his old associates as if they had the plague. If they would give information that would put people on their guard against these plans and manœuvres, and denounce the people who, in many instances, they know perfectly well are after no good, they would be far more profitably employed than hunting down the honestly inclined. It seems to me that the police do not think it comes within the scope of their duty to *prevent* a robbery—it is not till it has taken place that their services are required.

In the case of the great gold-dust robbery some years ago on the South Eastern Railway, Agar, the man who effected it, was working in league with others for months, and yet the police not only could not, and did not, prevent it, but after it was done they never found it out. A robbery of a large amount of valuable scrip shares and stock has lately been effected on the route between London and Paris; it is almost a certainty about that having been put up. That some of the police themselves are corruptible there can be no doubt. Do not recent prosecutions of celebrated detectives prove that it is only a question of 'price' with them? Sir Robert Walpole said that everyone had his price, and that every woman was to be bought if you knew her price. He never knew but one woman who refused gold, and she took diamonds. I have a better opinion of the women of our country of the present day than to think this true, but I am pretty sure it is true enough as to the police. Many of them levy black mail from thieves, and the number of things that are 'squared' between thieves and police would astonish the British public if they were all brought to light.

It is a curious fact I am told by those 'who know,' but a policeman is seldom on a night beat for very long before he 'finds' a watch and chain. At any rate, he gets one. Let the reader take note of the number of police that have watches and chains. Are these all the result of savings out of the liberal (?) wages a policeman gets, or are they, as prisoners have told me, the proceeds of blind eyes, deaf ears, and silent tongues? I cannot give an opinion myself. Let the inquisitive reader try and ascertain.

I have had several men ask me what I intended to do when released from prison, and have had all sorts of schemes proposed to me to join in. Two men who were in the association room with me, and whose time would expire a few weeks after mine, were most urgent for me to join them in the very lucrative game of illicit distillation, to supply publicans with strong, raw spirit. No doubt in the world it is a very paying game till discovered, and I daresay is carried on to a much greater extent than the public are aware of.

Let not the reader suppose it is done in some wretched hovel in Whitechapel or Bethnal Green. No; the plan proposed to me was to take a highly respectable villa at St. John's Wood. This locality was preferred on account of so many of the houses being snugly surrounded with walls. In such a house at the ordinary kitchen fire a sufficient quantity of spirits can be run off to make it pay well. The difficulty, it appears, is to get the raw material, sugar, &c., into the house without exciting suspicion. There seems to be none whatever in taking the spirits out and delivering them to the publicans, my informant telling me they used leather-covered tin cans made to represent portmanteaus and black leather hand-bags, containing about two gallons each, which is quite enough to supply the publican with each day, and are not too heavy to be carried in the hand without suspicion.

The establishment of a loan office was also proposed to me; and one man, an Austrian, sadly wanted me to join him in a quiet game of defrauding jewellers, pawnbrokers, and others in a most ingenious way. He was a lapidary by trade, and a very skilful one too. Most jewellers and pawnbrokers are well acquainted with what are called 'doublets.' These are rubies or emeralds made of two pieces. The face is a real ruby, emerald, or sapphire, as the case may be, and this is backed up by a piece of coloured

glass, which is fastened on in the first instance with Venice turpentine, and then secured by the setting. The glass improves the stone by throwing more colour into it, and doublets are very common. They are immediately detected by means of a file, which will not make any impression on the face of the stone, but the glass at the back it scratches directly. My Austrian tempter, however, could manufacture 'triplets,' and these, when skilfully done, particularly in sapphires, are impossible to be detected by the file test. A triplet is made as follows:—Two colourless topazes are prepared for the back and the front. Between these is neatly placed a piece of blue glass, and the three are stuck together with Venice turpentine. I need hardly say the workmanship must needs be first-rate. Sapphires answer best, because the topazes absorb blue better than any other colour. By a little clever manipulation the turpentine by which the pieces are joined together actually is made to represent a flaw or feather in the stone, thus making it look more like real than it would be possible to do with one single piece. Thus the back as well as the front being of hard stone and unimpressionable by a file, that test is of no use, and if applied only tends to confirm the idea that the stone is genuine.

Now for the masterpiece of the proposed swindle. These sapphires are set in rings, brooches, and other ornaments, surrounded by brilliants of as pure water as can possibly be got. In the diamonds there is no deception—they are genuine and good. No one who knows anything of stones is deceived for one instant in a brilliant; but seeing a fine-looking sapphire handsomely set in very high-class brilliants, the jeweller or other victim is completely thrown off his guard. It is utterly impossible to detect the fraud but in one way: taking the stone out of the setting and placing it in warm water. The three pieces immediately separate, and the swindle is detected. Knowing I was acquainted with many people in good position, he made me most tempting offers to become his salesman, and assured me that previous to his getting into prison for a crime not in any way connected with jewellery he had made 'pots of money' at it, and 'stuck' both jewellers and pawnbrokers with them all over the country. I need hardly say I listened to his proposals with a deaf ear, and I have never seen the man since. This was one of the most ingenious ideas I ever heard of while in prison.

After I had been at the cutting-board a few months two things happened that at the time I did not like at all: Jemmy gave me another promotion, and I was moved from the cells into the association rooms, and so entered on to a completely new phase of prison life.

A new man had been imported into the tailors' gang named Stephens. I recognised his face as having been one of the tower orderlies at Pentagon No. 3, at Millbank—one of the men who waited upon the officers in the circular tower in the centre of the Pentagon Yard. Somehow he made Jemmy acquainted with the fact that he was used to cutting clothes, having been employed in that capacity in some large outfitter's in London. He was a more useful man at the board than I was, as he could help the master-tailor himself by cutting many of the officers' things, and just then a large order had come in for officers' top-coats for some of the other prisons. So Jemmy commenced his operations for a change by coming out one day when a dispute was going on between Garibaldi and some of the men on the board about hot irons. After asking two or three questions Jemmy 'sacked' Garibaldi and sent him to prison clothes-mending. He then called me into his room and said he was going to promote me again, and that he would give me the charge of the stove and the irons. Of course I could not refuse. A slave I was, and as a slave I must obey; but he saw I did not like it. 'The man at the prison repairs and clothing-board will be going home shortly—I see he is growing his hair—and you shall have that place, if you like, when he goes.' I thanked him, and said I would take the stove.

The fact was Jemmy wanted to keep me in good cue, for I went into his room every day and kept all his stock accounts in order for him. Every piece of cloth, fustian, flannel, or shirting received from the steward's office had to be exactly accounted for and entered into a book, against which was charged the number of garments cut out of it, specifying what they were. Jemmy was a better hand with his shears than his pen, and withal was not a good calculator; so I used to save him a great deal of trouble. So long as I was a *special* man, doing special work, he could call me into his room when he wanted me; but to do so out of the bay, if I was at work mending clothes, would have created some little confusion; besides, I am quite sure the chief warder had given him particular directions

about me. To the irons, therefore, I set to work. The only part I disliked was the attending the fire, which was dirty work. I knew I should only have it for a short time, and that was a comfort.

The moving from the cells I did not at first like at all; but afterwards, when I became accustomed to it, I would not have gone back to the cells on any account.

One evening, after tea—I was a second-class and tea-man now—Dicks came along the landing, opening several cells, and mine among the rest. 'Take your sheets, towel, books, and register ticket and go down to the hall.' On getting down below I found a lot of men drawn up, all with their sheets, &c., done up into what was called their kit. I was at first alarmed, thinking we were going to be sent to some other station; but presently the principal told us we were to go to the association rooms in No. 3. Away to No. 3 we marched.

There were then four large rooms, under the tailors' shop, fitted up as association rooms. Two were on the ground-floor and two on the first-floor. Each had accommodation for sixty-eight prisoners. The floor of the building was divided down the centre, by a wooden partition, into two long rooms about 100 feet in length by 30 in width. These rooms were divided into three equal portions lengthways by two rows of strong wood posts, with rails, 2 feet 6 inches from the ground. The centre portion was the gangway, and the two sides were where the men slung their hammocks at night and sat in the day. Along the walls were shelves—one at the top, 3 feet wide, and one below, 1 foot wide. Below the narrower shelf was a strong wooden rail, 4 feet from the ground; all along the wall, 2 feet 10 inches from the ground, ran a strong 1-inch iron bar, held to the wall by heavy staples and clamps at intervals; and along the inside of the wooden rail in the middle was a similar 1-inch iron rail. From one rail to the other the hammocks were stretched at night-time for the men to sleep on. In the day-time the hammocks and pillows were rolled up neatly and put on the top shelf, with each man's regular number fastened on to the edge of the shelf. On the narrow shelf below were placed in regular order each man's tin plate, pint mug, books, slate, tin knife, and spoon. On the rail below the shelf were hung the blankets, sheets, and rugs, neatly folded, also in regulation form. When the hammocks were all slung down the

wall side of the room, along which there were at intervals windows about 3 feet square (there were thirty-six in all), with just bare space for a man to stand up between each to dress, and no more. On the opposite side of the room there were only thirty-two men, as in the centre of the building was erected a warming apparatus, going right up through each floor and through the tailors' shop, where it joined the iron stove, and continued to the roof. The space occupied by this displaced four men; hence there were only thirty-two on that side of each room. At intervals were tables at which four men could sit, and forms to match. These tables shifted up and down; one end hung on with iron hooks to the hammock rails, and the other was supported by an iron swing trestle. When taken down this trestle folded back against the table, which was then placed flat against the wall and the form next to it. Each table accommodated four men, and the lot was called a bay. In each bay was a bucket with water, in which the men washed their hands and also their tins and utensils. At one end of the room was a long trough, similar to a horse-trough or manger. This was fitted with taps and plugs, and in it the men all washed their faces and hands. This washing-trough ran right across the end of the room. When the men washed in it in the morning there were two or three taps running with water, and it flowed out as fast as it came in, so that it was not quite so dirty in practice as it seemed at first in theory—*sixty-eight men all washing together in one trough.* Some men had to be almost driven to the trough to wash at all. With others the struggle was to get, if possible, to one of the taps. It used to be my effort to get there, so as to put my head under it. A latrine and sink were in each room near the trough. The room had a particularly neat and orderly appearance when all the hammocks were stowed on the shelves and everything put into its place. Every man had his own towel, which he rolled up in a very neat way, with his soap in the middle; and in addition there was one towel in each bay, to wipe tins.

There were many disadvantages and also advantages in the rooms as compared with the cells. The chief disadvantage was, that a man had no privacy, was never by himself. I used to miss my wash nearly all over every morning very much. A great deal, of course, depended on the men one was associated with in the bay as to whether there was peace and comfort or otherwise.

The men selected for the rooms were all well-conducted men, of first and second class. There was much more liberty in the rooms, no doubt, as conversation at the table was general; and a good deal from one table to another, if not too loud, was winked at by decent warders, if not permitted. There is not the slightest doubt but the rooms are far healthier than the cells. The latter in the morning were close and stuffy; the rooms were never so. The ventilation was good, in fact too good, or rather there was too much of it sometimes; and when the new doctor came he had as many crotchets in his head about ventilation as would have ruined a Crœsus. He was everlastingly trying experiments. Thermometers were all over the place; and because at the best of times we had a difficulty in winter from keeping the snow from driving in between the window-frames and the walls, this experimentalising wiseacre must needs have all the upper panes of the windows taken out and perforated ventilating glass put in. The consequence was that after the first snowstorm some of the men had three or four inches of snow on their bed-clothes in the morning, driven in through the 'Doctor's cracks,' as the long slits in the glass were called. He did not touch the cells, that needed fresh air; but with the rooms, where we had difficulty to keep out the wind and rain and snow, he was everlastingly at some new plan.

At first I did not like the change at all, and thought seriously of interviewing the chief warder and asking to go back to the cells; but I had a *tête-à-tête* with him sooner than I expected.

The moment the men came in from work, instead of putting out brooms, as in the cells, for the officer to take the roll, every man stood up with his back to the gangway and facing the shelves immediately in front of his register number under his hammock. The officer then counted the men and reported accordingly.

Part of my work now, just before leaving the workshop for dinner, was to bank up the fire and fill the oven with irons, to be ready for the men's use after dinner in pressing their work. This, of course, dirtied my hands, and I was anxious to wash them before dinner, and as our men came in before the others I had plenty of time generally. Sometimes, however, the other gangs would be quicker in coming in, and then I had but short time to wash before the roll was taken. I was first of all placed in a ward upstairs, the officer of which was the warder of the cleaning gang, a

disagreeable old fellow, who thought it a great piece of unnecessary nonsense for me to wash my hands before dinner. 'He never did.' He used to grumble at me every day, but I would still persist in doing it, for if I did not do it before the dinner was served, which took place immediately after the roll was called, I could not do it at all, as no man was allowed to move from his seat during dinner.

One day he was in a terrible way, and I was not in the best of humours myself, so when he came to me as I was stooping to the bucket, he said he would not allow any man to wash his hands before dinner—it was all nonsense.

'Nonsense or no nonsense, Sir, I shall not eat my dinner with dirty hands.'

'You shall not wash them; if you do again I'll report you.'

'Perhaps, Sir, you will be good enough to put my name down to see the chief this evening, and I'll ask his permission.'

The old man glared at me with rage. I was quite in order, and had a perfect right to appeal to Cæsar, but it was what he least expected. He looked out for a 'cheeky answer,' a 'bit of lip,' and had I given it to him he would have reported me without fail.

That evening I saw the chief and explained the matter to him, and asked him to remove me back to the cells. He heard all I had to say very quietly, and said he would rectify it, but as to moving me back to the cells he should not do that, as it was considered a privilege to be in the rooms, and only good-conduct men were selected for that purpose. He was quite sure I should prefer the rooms after a while. He was right—I did prefer them, and finished my time there, but not in that room.

The next morning the principal of the prison gave out that any man wishing to wash his hands in the bucket before dinner was at liberty to do so.

This was a bitter pill for Old Wainwright, the warder, and he thought he had better get rid of me as quickly as possible, so he arranged with the warders of one of the rooms downstairs, A 2, for a transfer, and that evening after supper down I went, with my sheets and kit under my arm. The first thing I noticed was my friend A—— at the adjoining table, and in other bays were several I had known a little of since I had been in misfortune. I had for messmates three men of very different characters. One

was a shocking fellow with a wooden leg, whom we christened Peggy. He was doing his third or fourth lagging, and if he lives long enough will do four or five more. He was what Artemus Ward calls a most 'amusin' old cuss,' but an awful old sinner —a regular bad one. He sat next to me, and during the whole time I was there, which was many months, I never had cause to complain of him. His weakness was 'sums.' Only set him sums on his slate, and correct them for him, and he would be as pleased as a child with a new picture-book. Next to him sat at first a country bumkpin of a fellow, a victim of justices' justice; and at the other end of the table a young man who had been in a very respectable position in the City, but had been guilty of bigamy, and to such a degree that he 'got it hot' for such a crime—five years. He was a very well-conducted young fellow, and very reticent as to his own affairs. He worked in the shoemakers' gang. The other two men were both in the quarrymen's party.

We had two warders and two assistant warders. The warders were permanent, but the assistants were always changing. Every evening one or other of the warders took it in turn to be on duty, and the other went home. They were also alternately on duty on Sunday. In the rooms we were, of course, always under the immediate eye of the warder, which at first was somewhat annoying, but it was no more than we had been when in the cells; but our being able to see the warder, as well as he being able to spy upon us, made the supervision appear more than it really was.

Our two warders were very favourable examples of prison officers. Higson, the senior, a tall, dark Devonian of unmistakable Phœnician origin, had charge in the daytime of the quarry gang, and was a straightforward sort of fellow. He had a brother, a principal, a very fine stout man, and always called Big Higson. Our other warder was a little Welshman, Davies, with two teeth sticking out prominently in front that no amount of moustache or beard could hide, and two sharp eyes that made him look like a fierce buck rat. He had one of the shoemakers' gangs, and was an instructor in the shop. He was much better than many of the officers, but was a bit of a sneak and very uncertain. A man might do a thing with impunity on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and on Thursday be threatened with 'running in' or reporting for the same thing. I had no reason to complain of his

behaviour to me but once, about three months before I left the prison, but I always felt more comfortable when I saw him go home to the bosom of his family and leave Mr. Higson in charge of the ward. Davies was 'dead nuts' upon cutting men's hair. The whole evening long was he calling men out to be operated upon. I used to wonder whether, when he was at home and had no prisoners to order to be cropped, he made the little Davieses have their polls denuded, or did Mrs. D. get them all to bed out of his way before his arrival?

It is the rule when a man has run out his time to three months for him to go up to the governor and get permission to grow his hair and beard. About four months before my time was up I had been to the governor and petitioned to have the marks I had lost, equivalent to three weeks' time, restored to me. I had been reported twice for trivial matters and lost forty-eight marks each time, and the rest had been lost, not through misconduct, but by regulations as to short time that I myself had not any control over. The Major received my petition very kindly, and said that he had no power himself to grant the remission, but the director would be down in a few days, and he would lay it before him and back it up. Thinking to kill two birds with one stone, I asked for permission to grow my hair. This the governor said should be granted me. I, and everyone else, considered that the permission dated from there and then, and when I got back I told Mr. Higson so. He inquired of the principal of the week, who confirmed what I said. Consequently I was not called out to be cropped, although there was no order entered on the books of the ward from the governor's office. About three weeks after this the director, Captain S——, came down, and on hearing my application, and taking into consideration the special work I had been then doing, he gave me my full remission, and at the time this was entered in the books the order for my hair-growing was also entered.

A principal warder, named Keith, a waspish little fellow who bore me no goodwill, a man I disliked much, was the principal on duty that day at No. 1, where the punishment cells and governor's audience-room are situated, and he of course saw the book and the entries. Before the orders were sent from the governor's clerk to the different prisons, he came down and told Davies exactly how matters stood, and if possible to give me a crop before the order-

book arrived in the ward. Immediately after supper Davies called me out, greatly to my own and everyone else's astonishment, to be cropped. I naturally protested, and told him I had got the permission. He asked me to point out my name on the list of those to whom permission had been granted, and which hung up in the ward. Of course my name, for the reason I have stated, was not there, and I had to submit, and was cropped as close as scissors could cut. Before the evening was out the order came down and my name was entered on the list. I am quite convinced it was a planned thing with Keith. I took good care it should get to the governor's ears how I had been served, and I think before I left Keith was more sorry about the thing than I was.

Things like this petty tyranny it is that bring up the devil in men's hearts and brains, and many cases of outbreak and assaults on warders by prisoners may be traced to a series of such irritating persecutions. Some warders take a delight in causing a prisoner all the possible inconvenience they can, knowing the man cannot retaliate or even protect himself.

The reader must remember that all these little apparently trivial matters become great, if not important, items in the existence of men who are entirely shut in from the outer world; with whom, in the absence of any other events to occupy the mind and attention, the smallest things become magnified and constitute themselves events of much greater importance in the daily routine of a monotonous life utterly devoid of change or any excitement. In the busy life of the outer world there is so much to occupy men's minds and attention that trifles are unheeded which in the daily existence of a convict become matters of interest and importance. So also it is on a long voyage. Those of my readers who have passed many months on board ship will understand well what I mean, and know how the temper and real grit of every man is severely tried and tested.

I have already spoken of a brute of a fellow known as 'Long-nosed Smith,' an assistant warder. He has, when on duty in our ward, looked deliberately round to see whom he can annoy, in hopes of making the man do or say something for which he can report him. Several times I have noticed him first look to see which gas-burner threw its light upon the book which I have been reading, and then deliberately place himself directly in the way, so

as to cast a shadow on my book and if possible prevent my reading. It was most annoying, and at first I used to try all manner of ways to sit and hold my book so as to escape his shadow. I found that only amused him, so I tried another plan; and though I could not see clearly to read, particularly if it happened to be small print, I would take no notice and sit just as if there was no shade over me. After a while he would leave me and go to some other man and do the same thing. He would accuse men of doing things they never dreamed of. He was very fond, when he was on duty with us in the rooms while we were eating our dinners, of actually accusing men of an intention of doing a thing.

'I say, you Jones there, I see you *a-going* to give that man your bread. I'd just advise you not to. I've got my eye on you.'

Now, the man had no more intention of giving his bread away than of flying. Probably he would much rather have had an extra allowance himself if he could have got it. At one time Smith had the duty of searching or turning over the cells while the men were out to work. He made most wonderful discoveries of things hidden away where I firmly believe he first put them himself, as they were not the places where a knowing prisoner would stow them. He got many men into trouble. It was no use a man's protesting he had never seen this or that before. A prisoner's word is *never* taken against an officer's. In time he had the reputation among his superiors of being a smart officer—too smart a good deal.

Offences in prisons and elsewhere can be manufactured as well as atrocities in Bulgaria. Smith, wishing to get still further thanks for his vigilance, first of all secreted and then found a very formidable piece of iron—a 6-inch holdfast—in the cell of a man who had been in serious trouble once before and, I think, had worn the black dress and 'slangs,' as the fetters are called. The possession of this iron was a serious offence. It meant either an attempt to break out of prison or attacking a warder. Now, either one or the other is equally futile. As to getting out, no man but a madman would try to make his escape by getting out of a cell; and as for attacking a warder, if a man wanted to do that he had only to take his stool by the leg and he had at once a weapon worth two, ay, a dozen 6-inch holdfasts. If he wanted the holdfast to throw at an officer's head, his pewter chamber, weighing 7 lb. or 8 lb., would be a much more effective missile. However, this poor fellow

was 'run in;' and, being a man of hot and revengeful temper, he really did send one of his boots at the 'long nose,' but, it is to be deeply regretted, did not aim straight and hit it. For this he was 'put back' for the director's visit, as it is not in the power of the governor to order any man corporal punishment. The director ordered him to be 'bashed' or flogged. There seems, however, at last some doubt to have come over the governor's mind whether all these wonderful discoveries of Mr. Smith were really genuine, because none of the other searching officers ever found such things as he did, and so he was removed from that to other duties. His masterpiece of the iron holdfast, however, was a settler for him. The men one and all took such a hatred to him, and so unmistakably expressed it, not only in words but in most significant looks, that he was afraid to go out with any of the bog gangs, for fear he should have been set upon. When appointed to go with the quarry gang he was suddenly ill and went off duty. That is the most dangerous gang for an unpopular officer to go with. A chance may arise for a man, *quite by accident on purpose*, to loosen a large block of stone over the head of anyone beneath him; and if that man below should be an officer of Mr. Smith's sort, it is not unlikely to take place, greatly to his discomfort. Accidents that cannot be helped happen often enough.

I was much pleased in the rooms at the respect the men paid to those who had the courage to go upon their knees morning and night to pray. In the cell, of course, a man has all the privacy of his own apartment for such a purpose, with the single exception of the officer who may take a quiet peep through the spyhole. In the rooms it was quite another thing. Here were sixty-eight men and two officers. Now, who, thought I, will have the moral courage to face sneers and derision or jokes and kneel before he begins his day's work or lays his head upon the pillow? I thought of this just before bedtime. Presently a bell sounded.

'Tables down,' called the warder.

Every table was taken down and placed against the wall, and the forms in front of them. The men then all stood in two rows facing each other.

The warder's voice is heard again—

'Those who wish to say their prayers can step to the rear. Silence and order for prayers.'

Five minutes was the time allowed, and by that time all the men had finished their petitions to their Heavenly Father, and had risen to their feet, resuming their places in the rank. I was most agreeably surprised at seeing so many. I think on an average there were nearly one-fifth of the whole. I never once heard a remark from the most hardened in derision or disparagement of this practice.

'Beds down,' shouts the warder, when the last man had risen from his knees and resumed his place in the rank. Every man springs up, hauls down his hammock, proceeds to sling it and make his bed, undress and get into it. When the men are all in bed the night-watch comes on duty. He counts the number of men in bed, gives the roll or number to the other officer, who tells him if he is right—if not he counts again—and then the day warders leave, and the new one, always an assistant warder, takes charge for the night. The gas is turned *down*, not out, and silence prevails. There is a little whispered conversation going on at times, but generally the men are tired and glad to get to sleep.

There was one difference as to sleeping in the rooms and the cells. In the latter a man may sleep how he likes—in his boots, if it so pleases him—but in the rooms every man must thoroughly undress, taking off everything but his shirt and flannel vest. His clothes are laid at the foot of his hammock in such an order that the officer can see at a glance if all are there.

To sleep in one's stockings is a great temptation on a bitter cold night, but is not allowed in the rooms. Why this difference is made I cannot tell, particularly as the rooms are considered to be privileged and are for well-conducted men.

I never at any time could eat the whole allowance of my bread. When in the cells I put what I did not want on my shelf, and very frequently hungry fellows would steal it. Old Dicks remonstrated with me on this, saying I was putting temptation in men's way, and that if seen they would get punished, so afterwards I always gave it back with my empty dinner-tins. In the rooms there was generally some one at the table who would eat all I could leave. Some men would steal anything eatable they could lay their hands upon.

Our breakfast twelve-ounce loaves were much nicer bread—why I never could tell—than the six-ounce loaves at dinner, or the eight-ounce at supper. I used, therefore, to eat the crust of my

breakfast loaf at breakfast, and put by the crumb in my pint pot for dinner, to put into the soup; and I gave my dinner loaf, or best part of it, away to those at the table. Sometimes, however, we would find all our tins emptied and our bread gone. Not only would the men take bread, but candles, and eat them. One man was 'bowled out' with the wicks of a whole bunch, three pounds of candles, he had 'filched' out of the landing store cupboard and had eaten. He could not eat the wicks, so put them in his pocket, and on being 'rubbed down' they were found upon him.

I named on a previous page that one of the men at my table was a victim of justices' justice. This man was sentenced to seven years for stealing twelve eggs from under a duck. He had been sentenced previously some three years before for two months to the county gaol for stealing a pound of butter. He was a farm labourer, and had eleven shillings a week, a wife and four children. He had sickness in his house, and was driven by his children's wants to take twelve eggs from under a duck that had just begun to sit in a hedge near the farmyard pond. That man has told me frequently that he worked far harder for his eleven shillings a week than ever he had at stone-quarrying or anything else in prison. When at home he seldom, if ever, had meat of any sort, and when he did it was only fat bacon, and his bed was but a poor affair compared to his prison couch. Here in prison, comparatively speaking, he 'fared sumptuously every day,' and I can assure the reader he considered the living luxurious compared to what he had at home; and as for his bed he said he never slept so comfortably in his life, and should sadly miss it when he returned home.

I asked him what his wife and children were doing. The parish allowed her half-a-crown a week, and gave her four quartern loaves as well. Now, just calculate what this man's imprisonment cost his county. At the rate he was working he would not save more than nine months out of his time as remission, and would serve six years and three months. Taking the quartern loaf on an average of sevenpence, the cost would be as follows:—

Six years and nine months, or 351 weeks @ 2/6 . .	£43 17 6
Four quarterns for 351 weeks = 1404 @ 7*d.*	40 19 0
	£84 16 6

This would come out of the county rates, and, with the cost of his prosecution, &c., would make in all 100*l*. I question much whether six months or even less, with hard labour, would not have been a more reasonable and judicious sentence than seven years. In seven years he has got used to prison life. In fact, I question not only whether prison has lost all its terrors to him, but whether when he goes home and resumes his farm labouring and the difficulties of maintaining his family on eleven shillings a week, he will not often look back with regret to the soup and the meat and the comfortable bed, with comparatively little work and no anxiety, of Dartmoor. I shall in a future page give the reader my ideas on long and short sentences.

In our A 2 room we had a man who was always in hot water with the authorities, and who should have been wiser than to indulge in such puerilities. I should not mention his case but that it shows the 'unfortunate nobleman now at Dartmoor' is not singular in thinking the authorities of the prison have nothing else to do but invent tortures for him. This man, whom we will call Farmer, had held a colonel's commission in a Militia regiment of one of the smallest British isles. He was always leaving his slate exposed to view, with most insulting things addressed to the governor, the chaplain, or some other high authority of the prison. They generally assumed the shape of letters, apparently addressed to the various individuals, and couched in the very strongest language. Anything more silly I cannot conceive. To speak to he was a most inoffensive man, was highly educated, and spoke several languages. He was everlastingly in trouble. So, I expect, is the 'Claimant,' judging from some expressions I have seen in his letters to Mr. Onslow, and published in the papers. I could not help smiling at reading in the papers of June or July 1877 one of his letters, where, I see, he is quoting Latin. Do not let the public run away with the idea that this is any revived learning originally picked up at Stoneyhurst. He can, if he likes, have a Latin or a French dictionary and grammar and study both languages; and should he be located in one of the rooms, it is not improbable he may have a messmate who can coach him up, give him lessons in either language, and, if need be, write him a rough draft of a letter on his slate, which he would be allowed to take into the school hall and copy. I noticed his letters of late show a

great improvement over some of the productions read at the trial. I have myself written letters for many a man on his slate, which he has copied in the way I name; and more than once I have, with the schoolmaster's permission, actually written a man's letter for him on his paper, and he has signed it.

I did not like my stove appointment at all, and had it not been for the expectation of getting the prison clothing I would have declined it. In the first place, it was dirty, and in summer an intolerably hot job; and secondly, try what I would, I could never give satisfaction to the men on the board. At first I humoured them in every way, by giving them a 'hot one' or a 'spare'—that is, one that has been used as a hot one and begun to cool—just as they asked for them; but I found the more I tried to please the less I succeeded. One day, when I was in Jemmy's room, putting some cloth accounts down for him, I told him how difficult it was to please the men on the board.

'Oh, bother the fellows! If a man calls for an iron give him one; and if it is too hot let him wait till it cools. When it is too cold change it for a hot one. Let the beggars pass the irons to each other.'

The next morning I started on the principle of pleasing myself, and found it answered better than vainly endeavouring to please them. From the first if a man used any abusive language to me I would give him no iron at all. They appealed to Wilkins, but when I told him I would give no man an iron that knew not how to control his tongue, and I would not put up with abusive language, he very properly backed me up, and I soon taught the men to be civil.

At last the time grew very short with Gentleman Jem, and when he had only a fortnight to stay the master-tailor relieved me from the stove and put me to the clothing-table, to get me well into its duties before the other man left.

Just about this time the construction of a new tailors' shop was commenced, and no end of discussions took place in Jemmy's room as to how it should be portioned out, and where his cutting-room should be. It was over one of the shoemakers' workrooms, and adjoining the carpenters' shop. The upper room, where the tailors had hitherto worked, was fitted up as another association room, making five in all.

My duties at the clothing-table were multifarious. On Monday morning a large sack full of 'repairs,' cloth and fustian clothes, came up from each hall or room of the prison that required repairing. Every article had a tin tally attached to it, denoting where it came from, and inside every garment was stamped in figures an inch long the register number of the prisoner to whom it belonged. The first thing I did was to sort and count them all out, and state on a slate how many jackets, vests, trousers, and breeches had been sent up from each prison. By the time I had completed that, the clerk from the steward's office (not a prisoner) came up and counted them over again with me. Entering the numbers of each garment into a book, I then examined every article carefully, and those I thought had done their full service and were worn out I put on one side to be condemned. As I went over them this time I entered on my slate the particulars from every tally and the register numbers. That slate then showed where every garment came from and to whom it belonged. I then got the master-tailor to come and look over those I had set on one side for condemnation, and all those he so passed were put on one side, and I noted the sizes of each garment, and made out a fresh list of 'condemned,' with the sizes against each article. These were all to be replaced by new clothes at the end of the week, and the old clothes were cut up, the best parts of the stuff being saved to use for repairs and patches of other garments, and the rags and useless pieces were cast on one side and swept into the rubbish among the pieces I have already named as going away in bales. I then set to work 'fitting up' all those garments that wanted repairs, cutting out the rags and bad parts and fitting pieces of old cloth or fustian to make patches of. These I gave out to the repairers, as fast as I could get them done.

Every morning there came up a number of jackets to be 'badged' and the facings altered, as men were reported and lost their class or regained them, as I have already explained. The first thing I did was to prepare these badges, cut out a round of cloth of the proper colour, and stamp the same either in red or black, as the case required, with the letters P.S., the man's register number, and his sentence; these and the necessary strips of coloured cloth for facings were tucked into the pocket of the jacket, and it was thrown to the man doing the badging. At the end of each day the

re-badged jackets and such repairs as were done were sent back to their respective destinations in the several prisons. All this formed regular daily work.

There was a great deal besides that was irregular. All the new prison garments that were made in the shop were stowed away in one corner of the master-tailor's room till a large number were collected. Then I brought them out and marked them with the broad arrow, stamping them all over in regular allotted places. The cloth, fustian, and flannel clothes were stamped with black paint, and the shirts and slops with red. They were then tied up in bundles of a dozen of assorted sizes, and taken to the steward's store. Underclothing was only made of one size. What will fit a big man there is no difficulty in a little one getting into. The outer garments were made of three sizes, marked respectively, 3, 4, and 5. For any special sized man an extra sized suit was made to measure. A few men who were deformed, and who had doctor's certificates for that purpose, had trousers instead of knickerbocker breeches. While I was there, a change was made in the clothing of the men. The striped tweeds were discontinued as they wore out, and the jackets were made of coarse drab or light brown cloth, and the vests and breeches were made of fustian of a similar colour. The fustian, so long as they were not wet, were much the warmer, as the stuff being of a closer texture kept out the cold wind much better than the superfine quality cloth. All the blankets, sheets, towels, stockings, pocket-handkerchiefs, rugs, and hammocks used throughout the prison passed through my hands to be stamped. When a batch of large things, such as blankets, rugs, and sheets came up, I cut them out or apart, as the case may be, and gave them out to be hemmed, and when done I had to get assistance in stamping them; spreading them out on the floor for this purpose.

On Saturday I had a busy day. In the first place I had to get from the master-tailor any new clothes I had not in my stock that I required to replace the condemned ones. Then I had to look out new clothes to send down to the prisons. Every garment had the man's number stamped in it, and the tally tied on. The jackets had to be badged and faced as well. On Saturday morning every landing, ward, and room sent up requisitions for old clothes to be lent to men who were going to send their clothes to be mended on the next Monday. All these had to be looked out and together

with any repairs, and the new clothes were tied up in separate bundles for each landing, and then put into their proper bags for the respective prisons. I need hardly say this all required care and attention.

The first week I had it all to myself there were one or two mistakes; a bundle put into the wrong bag, &c. After that I never had any mistake till we had the misfortune, after Longnosed Smith was afraid to go out with a quarry gang, to have him sent to the tailors' shop as assistant warder. From the first day he came in the place there were nothing but rows and trouble. He reported more men in one week than had been reported in three months before. He tried to interfere with me in my work, but I at once went to Jemmy and told him he must protect me from that. No assistant warder ever had busied himself with the special work either in my time or Gentleman Jem's.

'All right,' said Jemmy; 'I'll see to it.'

The next time the objectionable long nose came poking itself about my place, I asked him what he was doing, and would he be kind enough not to disturb the things, as I had arranged them. I spoke loudly on purpose; I wanted Jemmy to hear, and so he did. Out he came—

'Now then, what's the matter with you, and what's all this shouting about?'

'I was requesting Mr. Smith, Sir,' I replied, 'not to disturb my work things, as they are all arranged in order.'

'Mr. Smith, I am master-tailor here, and when I want anyone to look after my special men, I will ask the governor to send me a man on purpose. There is quite enough for an assistant warder to do here in looking after his own duties. Mr. Wilkins, have you given your assistant any instructions to meddle with the special work?'

'No, Sir, I have given no orders at all,' replied Wilkins, 'and I never myself interfere with your departments. All I do here is to keep order in the shop.'

'If you want to remain here, Mr. Smith, you will please confine yourself to your own duties. If any of my special men do not do what is right, I'll very soon bring them in before the governor. If you are come here to take my place, say so at once, and I'll put on my hat and coat and walk out.'

I was troubled no more with Smith that week, but next Monday there was a pretty disturbance. The bags of clothes were carried down by prisoners to the respective prisons, and they were attended by the assistant warder—in this case, Smith. The men usually went also to the steward's store with any stock of clothes they had to deliver, and also to draw supplies of materials—cloth, thread, buttons, calico, flannel, &c.—for the next week. The men afterwards said that on getting to the bottom of the stairs they left all the bags as usual, and that while there, Smith left them in charge of the warder of the store while he went away for a few minutes—quite long enough to carry out his plan of revenge on me.

On Monday Jemmy came to me, looking as black as thunder, and in a furious manner said—

'What the deuce little game were you up to on Saturday? There was not one prison to which the things were sent right. I have had every warder in the place at me to know what I mean by giving them so much trouble. All the evening till bell-ringing were they running about changing bundles of clothes through your stupidity. If you can't do the work properly, I'll very soon get a man that can.'

I saw in one moment, by a look at Smith, that he had been having a finger in this matter; and I also saw that Jemmy's blowing up of me was all 'gaff.' He knew as well as I did the things left the shop all right, and he had as pretty shrewd a suspicion as I had of the clever party who had been at work.

'I can only say, Sir,' I replied, 'that when the things left here they were all right; I was as careful as I always am, and I am quite sure they left this shop all right. If the things were in the wrong bags, some one changed them after they left this place. It is very strange that for months past there has never been a single mistake, and now that every bag should be wrong.'

'It is strange, deuced strange!' said Jemmy.

'Some one must have changed them purposely,' I continued. 'The whole time Mr. Denver and Mr. Collins were assistant warders here, I never had any complaints of bundles being put into wrong bags. You say too, Sir, every bag was wrong. I can only say that is pretty good proof that some one had done it, either for a lark or for mischief, and by doing all the bags has overdone it.

Had there been one bag, one bundle wrong, I might have thought it possible I had made a mistake: but all being the same I think, Sir, is proof that some one——'

'What are you looking at me in that way for?' burst in Smith; 'do you mean to say I changed them? I'll——'

'If he did say so, I don't fancy he would be very far wrong,' put in Jemmy; 'that will do, go on with your work,' and off he walked.

After dinner, when we came out to join the gang on parade, we all missed the long nose of Mr. Smith; Jemmy had had quite enough of him in the shop. I think everyone in the place, even Wilkins, felt relieved when he was removed. There was an ugly-looking pock-marked warder in the infirmary, just such another as Smith, who I understand was a perpetual firebrand in the place. He used to come up occasionally into our shop with infirmary work, such as trusses to be re-covered, wanting an old shirt for some poor fellow who was dead, or for strips of old sheeting for bandages. He never came either to Stanley's or to my table without a snarl.

I have before made the remark that I think old soldiers are the best warders, and I think the discipline of the prison would be much better conducted if the warders were all taken from the ranks of discharged soldiers. The generality of men who enter the convict service as assistant warders are of a very poor type. They take to it as a last resource, except in some instances, such as where whole families—father and sons—are in it, and are to a certain extent born and bred in it. A man generally comes there with hardly a rag to his back or a shoe to his foot; has never had the least authority over another man in his life, and is suddenly placed with very great power and authority over a lot of men who are for the time being slaves to his orders, whims, and fancies. Very few become efficient officers; most of them are perfect tyrants. They soon find out that any accusation they make against a man is listened to, and the prisoner's word is under no circumstances believed. A wish to be considered an energetic officer will be the incentive with some, and the love of exercising a new power with others, which causes them to bully and tyrannise over the men.

In many respects I don't consider the discipline or the work hard enough, a remark I dare say many will be surprised at, com-

ing from one who has occupied the position I have of being a sufferer; but when the reader reads my remarks on long and short sentences, he will see my reasons for such a statement.

CHAPTER V.

DARTMOOR.

I HAVE already mentioned a case of a prison warder communicating with the friends of a prisoner and obtaining money thereby. While I was at Dartmoor a somewhat similar occurrence took place.

An assistant warder, whose duty was to search and turn over the cells in search of anything of a contraband character that might be hidden away, used to read the letters of prisoners received from their friends, that in the due order of things were left in their cells. By this means he became acquainted with the fact that the mother of a certain prisoner was not only a woman of ample means, but was of a soft-hearted nature, and was fretting herself very greatly at the horrors and discomforts of her dear but erring son. The letter contained her address, which he carefully noted, and at once commenced a correspondence with the credulous lady, representing to her that, being a warder in the prison, it was in his power to do great things for her son. He could save him from hard work, and, if money was remitted, would manage to supply him with all sorts of comforts and luxuries, that except for his intervention he could not possibly have. He also offered to become the bearer of letters to him from his family. He received some considerable remittances of money, and also parcels containing all sorts of good and comfortable things a fond mother may be imagined to send to her dear boy in trouble.

In due course letter-writing time arrived, when, in accordance with the rules of the prison, the man could receive letters from his friends, and also write to them in reply. Much to his surprise and anxiety he received no letter. Week after week went by, and still no news from home. He wished to hear from his mother before writing, but at last, no longer able to bear the suspense, he

applied for his ordinary permission and wrote home. His letter of course expressed his distress at receiving no news. Its receipt at home excited great surprise, and just as the duped mother was about to write to her warder correspondent, a confidential friend of the family called, and was made acquainted with the facts of the case. He at once saw his friend had been imposed upon, and, being a practical man, went straight to headquarters in Parliament Street to make inquiries. The truth at once was known. The 'gaff was blown,' and on inquiry being made at Dartmoor the whole affair came out. The assistant warder of course lost his situation, but was not prosecuted by the prisoner's friends for obtaining the money, as they did not wish to re-open a painful sore and bring an honoured family name again before the public. Had a prosecution by the mother taken place, the fact of her son's disgrace would be again revived. For infringing the prison bye-laws the man was prosecuted by the authorities and fined.

Such cases are more frequent than either the public or the authorities are aware of. Now and then they are discovered and are made public. In August of this present year, 1877, a warder at Brixton Convict Prison has been discovered carrying letters to and fro between a prisoner and his friends, and fined 5*l*.

The move into the new tailors' shop was a great event in our monotonous prison life, and created quite an excitement, at any rate among the tailors' gang, for weeks before and after. It was in many respects far more commodious, and in winter much warmer than in the old loft in No. 3 Prison.

My department was located in one corner, with a window from which I could actually see the high ground outside the prison walls. I regarded this as quite a luxury, though the look-out was only on to an almost barren wilderness. By getting on to my table I could get a glimpse of a bit of garden ground, which, after two years of seeing nothing but grey granite walls, was positively delightful. The first sight of the green shrubs waving in the wind was quite refreshing to the sight, and I contrived to have a shelf put over the window which required my frequently mounting on the table to get at, so that I could enjoy an occasional peep at this oasis.

I have already informed the reader that one of my duties was the condemning old clothes, and supplying the prisoners with new

in their place. After I had been in the post some few months Jemmy left the condemnation pretty well to me, and only came to my table and counted over the 'condemneds' as a matter of form. I had, therefore, the power of giving any man I liked a new jacket, vest, or pair of breeches, at pleasure. This was a dangerous privilege if not used with great care. I need scarcely say almost every man who could get to walk with me asked me to 'sling' him a new garment of some sort. His jacket or his breeches were very thin, and the weather was cold. I had offers of tobacco and bread. All manner of prison bribes were made to me. Not only was I importuned by my walking companions, but those who were known to be my friends, two especially, who I have alluded to before, were begged to use their influence with me. Had I done all that was asked of me there would hardly have been a shabby or patched article of clothing to be seen in the prison. I tried my best to act wisely and kindly, but before long I found I had such a set to deal with that I refused to listen to any more applications. I found some men would send up a jacket or other article really bad, and get a new one, and the same man would send up another old jacket in a few weeks. As I kept a list of all the new things supplied, and the register numbers of them, which my predecessor did not, I had a very sure and useful check, and consequently was able to bowl the scheming gentlemen out. I could not, however, understand how they had 'rung the changes' and got rid of the new garments I had a short while since supplied them with, and were able to send me another old one. The badges and facings were changed, but then I thought of the register numbers stamped inside. At last it came out.

A man who had bought a new jacket from another got into trouble and was reported. On going to the punishment cells to await a hearing before the governor each man is stripped—they are very fond of stripping men in the convict service—and his clothes examined. There happened to be a sharp-eyed warder on duty that day, who detected that the register number inside the jacket did not agree with the badge on the arm. He thought he had a good cause of complaint against me, and so up he walks straightway from No. 1 to the tailors' shop, with the jacket in his hand, and went right in to the master-tailor's cutting-room. Presently out comes Jemmy to me, in one of his furious moods.

'Hullo! what's the meaning of this? Look at this jacket; you have put a wrong number inside.'

I looked, and sure enough the two register numbers on badge and inside were very different.

'Wait a minute, Sir, till I refer to my list. What is the badge register number 37,632? I have never issued a jacket to such a number. What is the number inside?'

'24,316,' said Jemmy, reading off the figures.

After looking down my list I came to it.

'On August 14 I issued this jacket to that number from 3 landing, A hall, No. 2 Prison, cell 42, in place of a jacket condemned, a second-class badge.'

'Let me see your list.'

I handed it to the master-tailor, who, after looking at it attentively, laid it down, and took up the jacket and examined it closely.

'This badge is not sewn on with the same thread as the facings. There's some dodging about this. Here, give me your list.'

Off he walked with the warder to the punishment cells, and then it all came out. The man to whom the new jacket was originally supplied had 'slung' it to another man, of course for a good consideration, either in 'chuck,' *i.e.* bread, or something else.

Not long after this a similar case turned up, and there we found the register number had been obliterated; and once I came across some articles of clothing in which the registers had been altered very cleverly—no doubt with blacking.

I had to be particularly sharp in looking over and examining the things, and to be up to all the dodges and tricks played by the men.

I had a suspicion that there was some one in the tailors' shop who 'was working on the cross,' with regard to the changing of clothes, and I did all I could to discover it, for a long time without success. At last Jemmy said to me one day,

'—— There's some hanky panky business going on among the men of No. 2 Prison; the Catholic side is ringing changes, and it is done in this shop. Have you any suspicion of any man? The changes take place in the badging. The warders tell me that they often have complaints from men who have sent up good or new jackets to be badged, and that old ones are sent down to them, and I fear that all the good ones go into the Catholic Hall,'

'Then, Sir!' I replied, 'it is Garibaldi, who is now doing the badging.'

'No doubt; now you must watch him carefully, and find it out. But there is another and more serious complaint. How is it so many needles are about the prison? Only the other day one was found in a man's jacket that had been up here for repairs. That, too, was in the Catholic Hall. Master Garibaldi is the man, not a doubt of it. I'll go and look to his work now.'

Out he went, and taking up the work Garibaldi was doing he came with it to my table, and on comparing it with the memoranda on my slate, found it was not the jacket that had come up. A little looking about soon discovered the proper jacket stowed away behind his seat, where it would have remained till he had a fitting opportunity to place it among the repairs at my table.

'Ah! that's just what I thought, so you have been the man supplying No. 2 Prison with new things. I'll start you on the bogs at once. Here, Mr. Andrews,' calling to the assistant warder, 'take this man to No. 1 on my report.'

The tricks and games the men in the shop were up to were surprising. No man could get a new needle unless he produced the broken pieces of his old one. The officers, however, were satisfied if they saw them, and would throw them down anywhere on the ground. Such men as Garibaldi would, when it came to their turn to sweep up the shop, collect a lot of broken pieces, and would now and again call out they had broken their needles, produce two pieces, and get new ones. A needle once 'landed' in the prison could readily be exchanged for a loaf of bread or some other portion of food. A dirty bit of an old tobacco pipe would be worth several needles. What men in the cells wanted with needles I could never make out. Thread also was taken into the prisons, in spite of frequently searching the men.

Sometimes when out taking exercise after work the principal warder of the day would come and pick out a dozen or so of men he had any suspicion of, and march them away to one of the passages, where, with the assistance of a couple of warders, they would all be stripped and turned over. I was never turned over in this way at Dartmoor. I suppose no one ever suspected me. Nothing would have ever been found, for I never once took any-

thing of the sort out of the shop, or afterwards out of the Clerk of Works office or store.

There was a man named Hayes among the prison clothes menders who had formerly been a lawyer's clerk. He was very vain of his knowledge of Latin, and pretended to possess great Classical acquirements; but on a close acquaintance his real store of learning was found to be but very shallow. He was fond of trying to crack little jokes and *jeux de mots* with the Rev. Stanley at the shirt-mending table.

One intensely hot day, when every man had thrown off his jacket and vest, and worked in his shirt sleeves, Stanley, who was a heavy, stout man, had not only divested himself of his upper garments, but had taken off his stock, opened the neck of his shirt, and turned up his sleeves above the elbows. I went over to that side of the shop for something I wanted. Hayes and Stanley were chatting over their work as usual.

'Our friend here,' said Hayes to me, and jerking his head towards the parson, 'has not a very ecclesiastical appearance just now, has he?'

'No; he looks more sacerdotal than ecclesiastical at present,' I replied, 'and particularly brandishing that knife.' He had a knife in his hand, ripping up old blankets.

'I am quite at a loss to comprehend your meaning,' said Hayes.

'What, does not your Classical knowledge help you to see at once how well he would do for a priest of Jupiter, already stripped and armed, to slay the sacrificial ox?'

'Oh, capital, capital! I never thought of that. I shall make a mental note of that against when I am at liberty.'

'Mind you note it correctly, for fear of error,' said Stanley; 'second-hand "môts" when applied as originals sometimes lead their users into awkward mistakes.'

I have, in a former portion of this narrative, mentioned black and particoloured clothes worn by prisoners. For striking or threatening an officer the dress was black and drab, each piece alternate colours, and the sides of the breeches were open and fastened with buttons, like what are called 'overalls,' to admit of their being put on and off while the man wore chains fastened to his ankles with riveted rings. For attempting to escape the dress

was particoloured in the same way, but drab and yellow instead of drab and black. Men when undergoing the wearing of either of these dresses were not allowed to exercise with other prisoners, but walked by themselves and in single file, so that they were unable to enter into any conversation.

When a man is reported for any offence, his name is given in by the complaining officer, and is sent in to the principal warder of the day, who passes it on to the chief warder. In some cases the chief will inquire into and settle the matter himself, particularly if it is the first time a man's name has been handed in, and the subject of complaint is only a trivial affair. The names of those men handed in by the chief to be dealt with by the governor are given to the principal of No. 1 Prison, the punishment cells; and he sends a warder round some time during the morning to the different gangs and wards to collect the men.

On arriving at No. 1, each man is placed in a separate cell. Then he is stripped, and his clothes, on being examined, are returned to him except his boots and braces, which are left outside the door. The governor or deputy 'sits' at twelve o'clock, and first hears the reports. The prisoner is brought from the cell to the governor's room on the ground-floor. This is an ordinary office, with a door at each side. The prisoner on entering is divided from the governor and his clerk by strong iron railings, reaching from the floor to the ceiling. Against these he stands fronting the table at which the governor is seated, having before him not only the particular report on which the man is now brought up, but a formidable ledger-looking book, in which is entered the history of every man—his crime, and full particulars of his conduct since his arrest, with such remarks as may have been made by governors of other prisons, and all reports, if any, ever made against him. At a glance the governor sees what sort of a man he has before him, and deals accordingly. The officer making the report stands near the prisoner and states his case, and the governor asks what the man has to say in excuse for his breach of discipline. Behind the governor stands the chief warder, who can say a word either for or against the man, as he sees fit.

The governor can give a man solitary confinement, with a diet of bread an water, but not for more than three consecutive days. So that if a man is sentenced to fourteen days or a month, he must

have meat or soup every fourth day. Sometimes men have solitary confinement on half rations.

It is not in the power of the governor to order any man corporal punishment. If it is a serious case, the prisoner is remanded to the punishment cells on half diet, till the next visit of one of the directors of convict prisons, who, if needful, orders the man to be flogged with the 'cat,' six dozen being the greatest amount ever given. After being flogged a man wears for a certain time the black or yellow particoloured dress, according to his offence, with or without chains or 'slangs,' as the visiting director may order. The flogging takes place in the hall of No. 1 Prison, where triangles are fixed, and the man is triced up to them in the old military style. The doctor is always in attendance at a 'bashing,' and can at any time stop it, or prevent it altogether if he does not consider the man in a fit state to undergo it.

With a certain class of men I consider the 'cat' the very best and most effective punishment. My opinion is formed from observation, and from what I have gathered from prisoners. When discussing the question of long and short sentences, I shall speak further on the question of the 'cat.'

If a prisoner's conduct is violent or very bad, the principal warder, on the application of the officer of his gang or prison, can order him off to the cells at once, and not wait for the governor's messenger coming for him the next day.

An interview with the governor with any petition or request is held in the same office, after the reports have been disposed of.

A messenger from the governor's office, as I have already stated, comes round at dinner time and collects those who wish to see the governor or chaplain. On arriving at No. 1, the men for the governor are turned into a yard, unless it rains, and then they walk round until each man's turn comes, when he is called, and, going into the caged portion of the room, he mentions his register number, and at once states what he wants. The governor has before him the book with the particulars of the man's character, which assists him in dealing with the request before him. Those men for the chaplain are marched to his office, in a yard near No. 1.

Every application made by a man is entered in the ledger, and in fact every minute particular connected with his prison career. Each change of cell or ward, and also of gang, and the character

of the work he is employed on. Memoranda are also entered as to the character of the friends he writes to and receives letters from, and remarks as to the nature of the correspondence. If the governor has reason to suspect a prisoner is corresponding with improper parties, or with bad associates, he has power to refuse to forward any letters either to or from a prisoner. All these regulations are good in every way, as it is desirable, if possible, to break up 'gangs' of thieves, and also to separate men from their old evil associates as much as possible, particularly young men.

The last year of my servitude was passed in much more congenial employment than the superintending prison clothes. It having been determined to build a new large prison at Dartmoor, in which convicts could be confined in cells to do their 'separates' as the first eleven or twelve months' probationary imprisonment is termed, and on the same system as at Millbank and Pentonville, plans were prepared and the work set about by the prisoners under the direction of the engineer or clerk of the works, Mr. W——. A work of such magnitude of course entailed a very considerable augmentation of his duties, and necessitated his having extra assistance. I was fortunate in being selected as his clerk.

I have already told how I was stopped on parade by the chief warder just before his departure for Barbadoes. That day, at dinner time, I was called out of the ward by the governor's messenger, and on being ushered into the 'cage' was confronted by Major H——. I knew not what was required of me; but that some change was about to take place, I guessed from the chief warder's conversation in the morning.

'——,' said the Major, 'you understand accounts, I believe, and book-keeping?'

'Yes, Sir, thoroughly.'

'Can you draw plans, and do you know anything of engineering and the calculations required by engineers and builders?'

'Yes, Sir; I have had some little experience in plan drawing, and can do any sort of calculations.'

'Now ——, I am going to place you in a very responsible position for a prisoner, and I expect you will not abuse the confidence placed in you. Mr. W——, the clerk of the works, requires assistance, and you have been named to me as a fit man to assist him in his office. You will see and hear a great deal more there than you do in

the prison, and I recommend you to keep it to yourself and not retail it out to the prisoners. You will have under your charge stores of all sorts, and I trust you have too good sense to take anything into the prison. You will have to go all over the prison inside the walls, and if you conduct yourself properly and do not abuse the privileges the position will give you, you may finish your time much easier than other men. You will wear a special dress, and although great confidence will be placed in you, I may as well tell you that you will be very closely watched. You will remain in your old quarters in No. 3, and be attached to the carpenters' gang under Mr. Eastwood.'

'Thank you, Sir,' I replied, quite astonished at the whole affair; 'I will do my best to give every satisfaction, and will take care no confidence shall be abused by me.'

'Mind you do.'

Just as I was leaving, the chief told the warder to wait outside with me. In a few minutes out he came.

'Tell the master-tailor to fit you with a special suit, and have them ready for you to-morrow morning; and after chapel fall in with Mr. Eastwood's gang.'

'Yes, Sir; thank you, Sir; I am much obliged for your recommendation.'

On going up after dinner to the tailors' shop, I went into the cutting-room to Jemmy and told him of my 'promotion.' This was indeed promotion.

'It's well to be you,' said he; 'now I must look out for a man to take your place. Who do you think is a good man in the shop?'

'I really don't know, Sir; there are several who can do it. I had rather not suggest anyone myself.'

'Do you think Hayes would do, or is he too lazy?'

'You can give him a trial, Sir.'

'You can fit yourself up with a special dress. Blue cloth breeches, drab jacket with red cuffs, and first class blue facings and badge. What gang are you to be attached to?'

'Carpenters'.'

'Then take a slop as well.'

'I suppose I can help myself to new things, Sir?' I asked.

'You can please yourself about that.'

So off to my table I went, and looked out a special suit; in which, if possible, a man looks more hideous than in the ordinary costume.

Let the reader picture to himself the dress. Grey woollen cap striped with scarlet; drab jacket and vest, with a blue collar, and badge on left arm, and scarlet cuffs; blue breeches to the knee, with blue-grey stockings embellished with three scarlet rings round the legs an inch wide. Add to all this an embellishment of the broad arrow stamped in black all over, and conceive anything more like a macaw if you can.

The next morning I joined the carpenters' gang on parade, and took up my position in the rear as an outsider. On arriving at the carpenters' shop I found an assistant warder ready to conduct me to the clerk of the works' office. This is situate outside the inner gate looking on to the spacious outer yard and the rear of the governor's and deputy-governor's houses.

On entering the office there was an old man, in a warder's uniform, who I had never seen before. He was then acting as clerk to Mr. W—— in making up the daily work account. He had a most singular stoop in his neck, that without any bend of the back brought his chin down upon his breast. I found him afterwards a very decent fellow, who never interfered with me in any way, and was only too glad to have me there to take the work off his hands. The other, a little man, out of uniform, who was engaged in sweeping up, exclaimed, in strong Devonian accent—

'Here, Mr. Bullivant, this be your new "buttie," I 'spect.'

A buttie among Devon and Cornish miners is the term used for an assistant or the labourer who works with the skilled miner.

On his arrival I was introduced to Mr. W——, the engineer and clerk of the works, and in the course of a little time got into the routine of my work.

The clerk of the works' office and store is a small one-storied building, standing by itself. Facing the yard are two small offices. The outer one was mine, the inner one Mr. W——'s. At the rear were store rooms, in which were kept tools, nails, iron, brass, and all the things usually found in an ironmonger's shop, with an oilman's combined: soap, candles, oils, turpentine, paints, borax, rosin—everything, in fact, required in the building and repairs of a large establishment. My first orders were not to allow any of

the officers to enter those rooms, but to serve them out myself what they required, and for which they were to bring orders. These, I found, were very needful instructions, for very many of the warders and assistants were no more honest than the men they were placed in charge of.

I soon found the new prison was a large affair, and when I first saw the plans, and was asked if I could get out the working drawings of the details from the ¼-inch plan supplied, I began to realise I had plenty of work cut out for me. I had to keep an account of all the work done in the prison. The returns of every gang passed through my hands, and from these, at the end of the financial year, I had to compile the prison accounts, which I have since seen in the Parliamentary Blue Books.

It was getting winter when I was first appointed, and when I saw two bright fires burning in the two offices I felt comfortable at the prospect. These fires were always lighted before I arrived by the little man who called me 'buttie.'

Each day, on arriving at the office, I went into Mr. W——'s room to receive my special orders. I then set off on a tour round the workshops to collect the slates from the different warders in charge of the gangs that gave in a daily return of the work of their men. Hitherto I had never moved from one ward to another without having a warder to take charge of me. Now I roamed alone anywhere and everywhere; of course only where I had business to go.

My first visit was to the blacksmiths' shop, where some sixty or seventy men were busy at all manner of work in iron. The majority were making or repairing tools for the quarrymen and stonecutters, a very large number of whom were now engaged in getting and dressing granite for the new prison. Here I received a slate, on which was a list of the number of articles made, repaired, sharpened, steeled, and pointed; also of horses shod, and an account of all new material used from stock. Men in the blacksmiths' shop have two suits of clothes, one for work and one for Sunday. Every man, of course, was stripped of jacket and vest, and, having leather aprons on, lost much of the convict appearance of other gangs. But for the presence of the warders in their uniforms there was little difference between these shops and ordinary smiths' workshops in the outer world. From there I went to the

carpenters' shed, and received a similar slate, giving an account of work of all sorts, new things made and materials used, men employed in repairs, either in the prison or outside in the barracks and cottages of the officers in Princestown. Not only carpenters, but painters, paperhangers, whitewashers, and tinsmiths worked in this gang. Every wood or tin article used in the prison is made and repaired in this shop, and a strict account is kept even of the snuffers repaired. The tinmen kept a slate for themselves. Every man of the gang had his time accounted for on one or other of those slates, and those engaged in repairs, painting, papering, or whitewashing officers' quarters gave me a separate account, with full particulars of the special quarters or rooms, and what was done to each of them.

Then I proceeded to the stonecutting shed. Here, instead of slates, the warders had books, in which was entered every foot of stone cut, dressed, and finished for the new prison. Before I left there were nearly 400 men employed in these stone-sheds. Granite, I need hardly tell my readers, is far from a soft material to cut and dress into shape; and the vast number of steel tools, chisels, bitts, &c., used by them not only was prodigious, but amounted to a good round sum in money. The quarry gang warder, Mr. Higson, who was also the officer of our association room, gave me his book once a week, and I received the shoemakers' and tailors' accounts monthly.

On reaching the office with my slates I had to enter up, with books I kept on purpose, the day's work of each gang; and when I state that some gangs did work under as many as thirty-seven different headings the reader will see I could find plenty to do. Throughout the day officers were coming in for stores, which I delivered, and for which they signed. As soon as I could get my gang-books posted up I had drawings to do.

The new prison had originally been designed for some other place, to be executed in brick. The plan on quarter-inch scale was sent from head-quarters to Dartmoor to be carried out in granite. This entailed a good lot of work, and I never had an idle moment. In the afternoon, too, I had whatever correspondence there was from Mr. W——'s department, and wrote the needful orders to tradesmen and manufacturers for stores, &c.

Mr. W—— I found an exceedingly good fellow. Never once

did he treat me as a prisoner, and on many occasions consulted me on matters as if I was a brother official. There were, however, some of his subordinates who did not act in the same way. Over the builders was a civil foreman, and over the stonecutters a consequential little fellow as 'instructor.' The foreman was a decent man enough, but the little instructor was as thorough a little cad as ever stepped. Beyond a knowledge of cutting stone his acquirements were *nil*. More than once Mr. W—— had to 'bring him up to his bearings with a short turn.' He used to delight in doing anything he thought would annoy me. I never made any advance to companionship with him, and he resented it in many ways. He knew, of course, that prisoners longed for tobacco. I was an exception to this rule, and it was no denial to me to go without it. I had never been a great smoker, and had not smoked at all till I had arrived at middle age. This little fellow, whose name was Beatson, would stand at the desk by the side of me at work and cut up his tobacco, with a view of tantalising me, thinking I was longing for some of it. Once or twice he ventured upon giving me some orders, but I quietly told him I would ask Mr. W—— if it was to be done. I did so, and W—— said I was to pay no attention to him. I was frequently for hours by myself at work, the only interruption being a visit from some warder bringing a workman for stores of one kind or another. At any and all hours of the day the governor and deputy-governor would call in to the office to look at any drawing in progress and walk out. At first I saluted, but was afterwards told to go on with what I was engaged on, and take no notice of their presence unless spoken to. The directors would also look in, and sometimes Captain S—— would ask a question.

Just as I was assailed when in charge of the prison clothing was I now requested to bring all manner of things out of the store to the men in the prison, but I never took a single article. What I required to use for myself in the office I helped myself to. The greatest temptation to me was letter-writing. I had unlimited supplies of writing materials, and even postage stamps, and must own that the temptation to write a letter *home* and enclose it to some City friend was great. Mr. W—— simply instructed me to write to this firm or that, in all parts of the country as well as London, and had I written a letter and enclosed it to firms I knew in

London there was little or no fear of its being discovered. I had, however, given my word to the governor I would not abuse one single privilege, and I never did.

One special treat that I had was seeing nearly every day a newspaper. This, I think, was an oversight, and I don't believe the governor was aware I ever saw one. Mr. W—— had the 'Western Morning News,' a Plymouth paper, every day, and used to leave it on his desk. Whether he did so carelessly or with an intention that I might see it if I liked, I know not. I did, however, see it regularly, and the news I read I kept to myself. It would have been far too dangerous to have told anything to a fellow-prisoner. He would have repeated it, and then questions would have been asked how the information was obtained.

Papers did sometimes get into the prison in the same way that tobacco found its way there: officers would bring them to prisoners for a *consideration*. I remember one night we had a green hand on night duty in our ward of the association rooms, and he went to sleep. Before he had had forty winks his pockets were picked, not only of his tobacco-pouch, the real object of search, but of a newspaper too. His watch and staff were also taken, but these were given back to him in the morning. Of course he said nothing about it, for fear of committing himself for going to sleep.

It was very amusing how differently some of the warders treated me in my new position, seeing that I had it in my power to oblige many of them in various little ways, particularly those whose quarters were being done up. Every officer had certain quarters allotted to him, some in the barracks and some in the cottages in Princestown. At regular intervals these quarters were cleaned, repapered, coloured, whitewashed, and painted. I kept the lists, and had the power of nominating whose should be done next. I say I had the power, for so virtually I had. Mr. W—— left the arrangement of these matters so entirely in my hands that I could easily put an officer forward or backward on the list to suit his convenience and wish. As I gave the list to the clerk of the works he would initial it, and in that rotation the master-carpenter, Mr. Eastwood, whose duty it was to send men to the various quarters to do the work, would carry them out. Sometimes, it would suit an officer to have his renovation delayed for a few weeks. It suited his better half probably to have her

place done up later in the season instead of earlier. In other cases the parties were anxious to get their rooms beautified as quickly as possible.

I was much amused at times at the little jealousies as to patterns of wall-papers supplied for certain rooms. Whatever paper was served out was obliged to be used; and as the choice of what paper I delivered to the workmen calling on their way with the officer in charge to do the work rested entirely with me, I had several messages from Mr. Warder this or Mr. Warder that. 'Would you please let me have the same as used for quarters 19, in block B?' or 'Don't, please, send the green and yellow paper like No. 13 quarters, in the cottages, are done with, as my missus has seen it and she can't abide it.'

There was another thing that caused me to be very civilly treated by officers who had been as sharp and as curt as possible with me before. Several of the warders in charge of gangs were far from good hands at keeping their labour accounts, and I had to make up many a week's list for an officer from his memory. There was a good deal of guesswork about it sometimes, I am afraid. I had, of course, a most favourable opportunity of seeing a great deal of the working of convict labour, and I paid particular attention to all that came under my own immediate notice.

There is a great deal of very fair work done at Dartmoor, and I was surprised what good workmen many of the prisoners were, who, previous to being imprisoned, had never worked in their lives; but a convict's day's work will bear no comparison with that of an outdoor free man. What the outside gangs on the bogs may do I know not, but I always considered a prisoner's day's work—say, for instance, a blacksmith or a carpenter—not more than equal to half or two-thirds of that of a tradesman outside. The time men are actually at work is not more than seven hours, and in winter six, and they do not really work anything like so hard as free men. Of course there is no heart in a slave's or a prisoner's labour. Every man does as little as he possibly can. So long as what he does will pass muster, and he gets his marks, it is all a man cares for. Certainly prisoners are not fed as free workmen earning good wages are, and have not the same amount of stamina and physique; but, making due allowance for all that, I do not consider the average convict at Dartmoor can be said to work hard. There are some ex-

ceptions, particularly in the bog gangs. Dry walling is hard work occasionally. This consists of building walls and fences round the various fields and plots of land taken into cultivation and reclaimed from the wilderness. The walls are constructed of loose rough stones without mortar, and sometimes when the stones run large the labour of lifting them is heavy. Sometimes, too, a gang will have a hard taskmaster in their warder, who will take a delight in taxing men's strength.

While I was at Dartmoor a case occurred of a man's death being caused by the harshness of a warder. It was in a walling party. Two men tried to lift a stone that had been previously rolled upon a handbarrow, to carry it to the place it was required to be used. They tried and tried in vain. The officer refused to allow more than the two men to take the barrow, and insisted on their doing it by themselves, threatening to report them for laziness if they did not. One of the men was due to write home the next week. A report would lose him this privilege as well as the receiving a letter in reply. He tried again, put forth all his strength, and strained himself internally to such an extent that he fell to the ground, and before they could bring him into the infirmary he was past all earthly reports or punishments.

His work in this world was over, he re-entered the prison gates carried on the handbarrow he had tried in vain to lift, borne by four of his fellow-prisoners, who marched straight to the infirmary dead-house, there to leave him till viewed by the coroner's jury. Those at home who were looking forward to receive the letter he was so anxious to write would doubtless, after waiting some weeks in suspense at not hearing, write to inquire the reason of his silence, and in reply would receive the cold official notification that No. 00,0001, the prisoner John Jones, died on such a day of 'disease of the heart,' or some other convenient name brought forward by the doctor to comply with the legal requirements of 'crowner's law,' and cover another of the many barbarous mishaps—I was going to write murders—of tyrannical warders.

The opinions I had formerly entertained of the warders and assistant warders as a body were fully confirmed when my position in the office of Mr. W—— gave me opportunities of seeing them under other circumstances. I am thoroughly aware of the great difficulty the authorities must have in getting really efficient men

for these positions; indeed, I only wonder they manage to get so many good ones as they do, considering the source from which the majority are recruited. I am more than ever convinced that retired soldiers and sailors should be brought into this service to a greater extent than they are at present. Their former training fits them for the position. They are used to discipline themselves, and exercise their authority much better than those who have been brought fresh from loafing about the world. They themselves know how to obey, and that gives them a better knowledge of how to command. The scheming and intriguing that goes on among the warders one against the other no one but those who have to do with them can conceive. There was hardly one in the whole official corps at Dartmoor that would not do his best to intrigue a fellow-warder from his berth with a view of bettering himself. They watched each other and reported each other almost as keenly as they did the prisoners.

From my office window I saw every fresh lot of prisoners as on arrival they marched down the yard, and also every gang that left the prison for other stations. I also saw those who, having completed their terms of servitude, left the prison to be discharged.

Discharges take place in various ways. As already stated, when a man is first of all convicted his clothing is confiscated, and on his discharge the prison authorities give him others in their place. There is no item in the whole system that requires more thorough revision than this. Two courses are adopted. If a man joins the Prisoners' Aid Society, he has a small sum allowed to him, which is handed over to the society to purchase clothing; but if he does not an outfit is given to him, every article of which, except the boots, bears upon it the unmistakable mark of the convict prison. A man may just as well wear his ticket-of-leave in the front of his hat as the clothes given to him on leaving the prison. If he is a bricklayer or a farm labourer a good serviceable new suit of corduroy is given to him that is suitable for him and likely to do him good service. Moreover there is no prison brand about it, but with the other clothes it is quite different. I don't mean that the other clothes are marked with Her Majesty's broad arrow, or are stamped with any brand of the prison, but they are made of a material so thoroughly well known as prison stuff that every policeman knows the wearer has just emerged from a convict establishment.

The clothes men leave Dartmoor in are cut well, made well, and fitted well, and as far as the workmanship is concerned are a credit to the tailors' shop. Each man is measured by the master-tailor, but the material is such utter trash that a fortnight's wear and one shower of rain reduce them to mere rags. I doubt if any Jew slop-shop in London makes up such perfectly worthless stuff. It is the very commonest shoddy imitation of tweed, with a twill or pattern *printed* on it, to make it look like a common Yorkshire tweed. Such goods are made for export and are seldom or ever used in this country, being far too common. A very little extra cost for the material would give a man a serviceable suit of clothes. Is it fair or right to turn a man out of prison and expect him to pursue honest courses when every possible impediment is placed in his way? I will venture to say that not one suit of clothes I saw go from Dartmoor would stand a month's wear out of doors. A classification should be made of prisoners as to their positions prior to conviction, and the means they are about to adopt to earn a living on emerging into the world again. Let us take the case of a man who as a clerk has been convicted of embezzlement. He leaves the prison and has to seek a similar employment to that he has been used to. His friends (!) are suggested as the parties to help him. Yes, if he has any, but 99 out of 100 such men who get into trouble of this kind come out to find they have no friends; and as for their relatives, with the exception of a mother or a loving wife, they simply ignore him and express astonishment at his daring to come near them after having disgraced his family and their good name. It is small help he gets from them. His once large circle of friends give him the cold shoulder, and he finds he has to struggle with a hostile world by himself. How is he fitted to attempt this without a fair start in the shape of decent clothes? Why take pains to measure a man, and spend skilled labour in cutting and making well-fitting clothes out of such a material that is utterly useless?

The under clothes are many of them good. The stockings and flannels are excellent. The shirts, if for a working man, and blue striped, are capital both in material and work. Of the white shirts, the less that is said the better, except for night-shirts. The materials of the boots in general are of good quality, the workmanship first rate, far superior to the bulk of ready-made boots sold in

shops. The hat, nothing can be worse: it alone makes a man an object of suspicion.

I have been told that, providing a man goes straight from prison to Monmouth Street, Soho, or to Rosemary Lane, Minories, and is lucky enough not to be caught in the rain on his way, the clothes dealers will allow him 6*s.* for the whole turn-out of coat, trousers, vest, hat, and handkerchiefs. These they use for export, as no one in this country would buy such arrant rubbish.

I would, if possible, draw the attention of the directors of convict prisons to this subject. A very little more outlay would give discharged men good and suitable clothes to reappear in the world. The drab cloth of which the convicts' jackets are made is far superior. In fact, if they supplied the same stuff of various and darker colours, the men would have clothes that would do them service, and give them an opportunity to make a little headway in the world. I am under the impression that neither the prison authorities nor the police care to encourage men to reform, or to give them a fair chance of doing so. Their idea is that if men did reform, and did take to honest courses, instead of our prisons having to be periodically enlarged, and our police force increased, bringing promotion and new appointments, a falling off in both branches of the service would take place, and Othello's occupation would be gone from many of them who now look complacently on, and when a man is brought back for a second or a third 'lagging,' smile knowingly and say, 'Just as I expected.'

The prisoner who goes to the Prisoners' Aid Society in London does not take these shoddy clothes, but is sent up to town for discharge, and the society, out of the funds allowed, buy him some secondhand clothes to appear decent in the street with. During a man's servitude he earns a small sum of money, which is enough to keep him for a few days, or perhaps a week or so, after leaving.

A prisoner who has been convicted in the provinces does not go to London for discharge, but, on being rigged out in the clothes I have endeavoured to describe, is taken down to the railway station at Horrabridge. Here another official blunder takes place. An officer goes with him, and at the station takes a *special* convict's ticket for him to his destination, whither he is bound, wherever he was convicted from, or his home in that county. It is not enough that the man has a suit of clothes that tells every official on the

railway, and every policeman, and in fact everyone else that he is a discharged convict, but his very railway ticket confirms the fact.

Why need this be? Would not an ordinary ticket suffice? By all means let a warder go and take his ticket, and see him off, taking care he books for the right place, but do not let the ticket be such a one the man is ashamed to show before his fellow-travellers. It is a useless piece of precaution, and really defeats its own ends, if those ends are the giving the man a fair chance for a new start in life. The man has a few shillings given to him, and the rest of his money he obtains on presenting himself and his licence, or ticket-of-leave.

Then he has to fight his own way, reporting himself to the police every month. A very good arrangement, providing the police do not hunt the man out of honest employment. I am now speaking on behalf of those who are desirous of returning to honest courses. I know too well that many, too many by far, have not the remotest intention of ever trying to live honestly. I have heard of men who have actually committed robbery in the railway train on their way home from prison. These are hard nuts to crack, and require very different treatment to what they receive.

A man who has been convicted in London is sent there for discharge. If he is a Prisoners' Aid Society's man he travels up in convict's dress; if not, he goes up in the rig-out I have described. A warder go with him or them, as the case may be.

Here occurs another anomaly. The man convicted in the provinces leaves Dartmoor without handcuffs, and with his hands and limbs free. He who is to be taken to London for discharge is manacled and handcuffed as if he were fresh caught. Why is this? No man going up for discharge is at all likely to run away from the warder. Until he is completely discharged he has no licence, and if he did abscond he would be liable to arrest as a convict at liberty without leave. The handcuffing of a man in such circumstances is another of the official blunders—a cruel mistake. So long as he has any time to serve, and there is any inducement for him to run away, chain him up by all means. As a convict in a convict's dress, cropped and clipped, few, if any, would recognise him. When he goes up to London on his discharge journey, he has grown his hair, beard, and whiskers, and is dressed in what the authorities consider civilian costume. He travels with other people

who are also bound to London, and who, seeing him handcuffed, know very well his steel bracelets are not the insignia of honour. The chances are they may particularly notice the man, and one may probably see him a week or two afterwards when they will recognise him as a character to be avoided. If the intentions of the authorities are to give the man a fair start in life and a real chance to retrieve himself and get into an honest course of life, that is not the way to do it, and the sooner the order is rescinded the better.

On arrival at Paddington, the warder takes his charge in a cab to the Queen's Bench Prison in the Borough—the old celebrated prison for gentlemen debtors, Chancery victims, and first-class misdemeanants; the prison from which Lord Cochrane escaped; the place of which Sheridan said no man's education was completed till he had been in the Bench. No longer are debtors or Chancery victims confined there; no longer are its walls marked out into racquet courts. It has been a soldiers' prison ever since the laws for imprisonment for debt were revised, but it is now abandoned for that purpose and is merely used as a place from whence to discharge convicts. Men leave Dartmoor on Monday night, arriving at the Bench, or Queen's Prison, on Tuesday morning, where they remain doing nothing till the day of their discharge, which takes place one day during the same week.

I had omitted to say that every prisoner is photographed prior to leaving Dartmoor, and his carte-de-visite supplied to the various police-offices he has to go to for report. On the Wednesday all the prisoners for discharge that week have arrived at the Bench, and in the morning a number of detectives come and take stock of them all. The men stand in a row, and the detectives from both Scotland Yard and Old Jewry, together with policemen from other stations, come and make themselves fully acquainted with the men who are to be let loose in their districts. Each man is compared with his photograph and the written description of him. Of some men the police take no notice, or very little. Others they take special care to become thoroughly acquainted with in every position, and examine them most carefully. They know perfectly well who are likely to be in their hands again and who are not. Of me, when I was there, they hardly condescended to take any notice whatever. One certainly did say, 'Oh, you're not one of our birds,' and passed me by.

I could not but compare the liberation of the men I saw discharged to the uncarting the deer at Windsor, to whom a certain amount of law is given prior to the royal hounds being started off in pursuit.

Prisoners on licence, generally termed ticket-of-leave men, have to report themselves once every month at the police-station of the district where they reside, and to show how they are earning their living. I need hardly say that no men pronounce themselves as thieves by trade, and everyone has what is termed a 'stall,' *i.e.* he professes to be some handicraft or trade by which to designate himself, and which is a blind or stall to his real proceedings. If a man moves from one district in London to another, or from one part of the country to another, he must, within twenty-four hours of his arrival, report himself at the nearest police-station.

In my case I obviated all difficulty about the matter. On obtaining my liberty I went as fast as a four-wheeler could carry me to where I had appointed decent clothes to be sent to me. These I put on, glad to get once more into the habits of civilisation. I then walked straight to the chief office in Whitehall Place—not the Scotland Yard entrance—reported myself and stated my intention to leave England.

In a few days the Channel was crossed, and when my twelve-months ticket was expired I had the satisfaction of tearing it up and dropping it overboard as I returned again to England to endeavour to resume my place among friends and society. A monthly report to the police in my case meant absolute ruin, and I took good care to avoid it.

CHAPTER VI.

OBSERVATIONS, REFLECTIONS, AND SUGGESTIONS.

Now, having told my plain, unvarnished tale, let us consider what are the effects of the present convict system. What are its objects? Are those objects attained, and in the best possible way?

It would be quite impossible to devise a perfect system that

should meet all cases. That the present one is not only far from faultless, but fails to give satisfaction even to those who are placed at the head of the convict department to administer it, there can be no doubt.

The objects of our convict system and imprisonment of wrong-doers are, or should be, threefold—1st, the punishment of those who have transgressed the laws of the country, and the deterring others from crime; 2nd, the getting rid of the troublesome and criminal portion of the population; and 3rd, the doing of all this in the most efficient and least costly way to the taxpaying British public.

First.—The punishment of those who have transgressed the laws of the country.—The glaring evil of the present system is the want of some proper mode of classification of prisoners, and the mixing up together of comparatively innocent men, and young men in particular, with hardened old offenders—professed thieves, who, if they could earn money honestly, prefer to earn a less amount by evil and dishonest means—men whom no amount of imprisonment, as at present carried out, can or has reclaimed, and who come back time after time, 'lagging' after 'lagging,' till death at last, in the prison infirmary, closes their career.

The opinion I have formed, based on four long years' experience, is that the mixing of prisoners together is radically bad, and should at all cost be done away with. Men who are imprisoned for a first offence, whether it be in a county gaol or a convict prison, should most certainly be kept perfectly distinct from 'second timers,' and not on any account be brought into contact with old offenders, who in too many cases simply complete their education in vice. The punishment of penal servitude falls very unequally upon different classes. To a large number of criminals it is merely so many years being shut up in prison, restricted from doing their own will, and being compelled to labour, to a certain extent, whether they like it or not.

To the man in a good position it is moral death, accompanied with ruin and disgrace to his family and relatives. The actual punishment to men in my position is not the confinement, the coarse but wholesome food, the discomforts, and work: it is the terrible fall in social position, the stigma that clings to a man not only all his life, but, after his life is ended, to his children. So eminently

charitable are Christians in this present age, that they can seldom or ever forgive *detected* crime, even after it is expiated by long years of slavery and imprisonment. They delight in pointing the finger of scorn at the man, and the children of the man, not who has merely sinned, but who has been *detected* sinning, and has been legally punished for it. It is not the sin society finds so hard to forgive, so much as the being detected, *convicted*, and punished for it. A man who is, without a doubt, guilty, but who, by the dexterity of his counsel, some quibble of the law, or some fatal flaw in the indictment, gets off, can return unblushing to the world and resume his old position; but only let him be guilty, not of the sin, but of being legally convicted and sentenced—let him be, in fact, a *convict*—and society regards him as a leper ever after. So long as a man escapes actual conviction at a criminal bar, he can hold up his head in both private and commercial society; but let him only once be actually found guilty, no matter under what amount of what our French neighbours call 'extenuating circumstances,' and the chances are fearfully against his ever reinstating himself in his former position—at any rate, where he has lived before. There are at this moment men occupying prominent positions in the commercial world of London that I could name who have really been guilty of what would have given them sentences of many years' penal servitude, had the matters come out at the time.

I can instance several who have, of my own knowledge, been guilty of far more than I received a sentence of five years for, who are looked upon by those of the world who do not know them as I do, and by themselves especially, as paragons of all that is honourable and respectable.

One case, in particular, is that of a man, in an extensive way of business in the great centre of the City, whose advertisements appear from time to time in the newspapers, and who is not only connected with more than one member of the City Corporation, but has himself assisted in the civic government as a member of its Common Council. This man, a few years ago, became involved in some transactions that would have brought him very unpleasantly within the grip of the criminal law, but for the strenuous and Herculean exertions, almost night and day, of one of his brothers who succeeded in so arranging matters that he was extricated from the difficulty. A prisoner at Dartmoor would express the matter

in fewer words, and say at once, 'The thing was squared.' The brother whose exertions saved him from a criminal prosecution is since dead, and the man I allude to has testified his gratitude by coalescing with another brother to rob his widowed sister-in-law and her children of valuable property; and they are now in straitened circumstances, while the two brothers are enjoying what should be the orphan's and the widow's. Still he is eminently respectable. There are some in the City who know of his former 'little difficulty,' and what a narrow escape he had; but then he was *not* found guilty or convicted, and therefore, by the rules of society, he has a right to hold up his head. I suppose he would consider it a disgrace to walk on the same pavement with me, who *have* been convicted and who *have* suffered the degradation of penal servitude all through just such another as himself.

No man's history can be written till he is dead. It would not surprise me if some of the concluding chapters in those brothers' history, and some others I could name, contain a few pages that will greatly astonish many of their acquaintances and the world at large.

One thing that is required is that a man's first offence and punishment should not be made to last through his whole life in its consequences. A man becomes a bankrupt; he undergoes all the punishment, I may almost call it, of that position. He receives a certificate and resumes his place in the world. The world welcomes him, provided he is successful and makes money, is actually kind enough, if not to entirely forget he was ever bankrupt, at least to become oblivious of the ugly fact so far as never to allude to it. Society will readily tolerate a man becoming bankrupt twice or even thrice, so long as he rises again after each successive fall. Why cannot society be equally as tolerant with the man who has made one false step or become entangled in matters that have brought him into a criminal court, and who has suffered his punishment—has got his certificate of discharge—equally with the bankrupt? Why should not the one be considered as much a discharge as the other? If a man again does wrong and brings himself within criminal jurisdiction, then society is quite right in turning its virtuous back upon him, and I think he not only deserves society's treatment of 'taboo,' but that in his punishment he should be very differently dealt with than on the first occasion.

Unfortunately, society is 'righteous over much,' and it finds it as difficult to pardon the convicted felon, be he ever so penitent, as it does to forgive a woman who falls from her purity, and is found out, no matter under what circumstances of perjury and deception on the part of her seducer she may have succumbed.

Some quarter of a century ago, a very cruel case came to my knowledge. A man returned from Australia and brought with him his grown-up family and also considerable wealth. He opened a branch house in London in connection with his old business in the colony, shipping goods from here to there. A year or two after his opening the London house, the discovery of gold at Bathurst in New South Wales was made, and the Australian gold fever set in, with what vigour many of my readers will remember. His colonial knowledge enabled him to ship judiciously, and he also shipped largely.

In some matter of business he was concerned, a dispute took place that came for settlement in a legal court. The returned colonist was subpœnaed as a witness and entered the box to give evidence. The opposing counsel, in cross-examination, suddenly asked him a question that perfectly astonished the whole court.

'Were you ever transported?'

The witness was surprised at the question, and turned white and then red. He was a truthful man and on his oath.

'Yes! forty-three years ago, but under circumstances I can——'

'Never mind the circumstances, Sir. The fact is all I want to know. I have no further question to ask this witness.'

The poor fellow was debarred the right of making any explanation—though that came out when too late. There was the naked, ghastly fact. Forty and three years ago, when quite a lad, he had been found guilty of felony and was transported. That was quite enough for virtuous society, both commercial and fashionable. The man's credit was ruined. In a month he was in the Gazette, for everyone rushed at him who had any dealings with him and pulled him to pieces for money. In three months he died of a broken heart. His ventures and estate were all sacrificed, as such things are in bankruptcy, and the property he had honestly earned in Australia went to the winds of heaven.

Afterwards the whole of the facts of the case came out to a

few who had known him here, but who never for one moment ever suspected he had worn a convict's dress.

When quite a young man at college, he and a young nobleman started from Oxford on an outing, as many young collegians did in those days, and they hired for their purpose a horse and gig. They drove from place to place, and at last found themselves at Bristol, short of cash, and their leave from college close on expiring. At Bristol they could get no funds. Post was slow in those days. In an evil moment they determined to sell the horse and gig to defray their hotel bill and pay their fares back by coach to Oxford, where the young nobleman could at once get cash and pay 'the damage' to the jobmaster who had let the conveyance. Good intentions are not always carried out. The jobmaster heard of the sale of his horse and gig before the young travellers returned, and he took criminal proceedings. The commoner had effected the sale, and so there was no case against the nobleman. The young man was prosecuted, sentenced to seven years' transportation, and sent to New South Wales. There he served his time, started in business, and did well. He was an honest man and became a thriving one. In time he married, and unfortunately, after forty years, had an inclination to return to Old England's shores. With what result the reader knows. English virtuous society received the rich Australian merchant, but could not forgive the 'convict,' though so many years had passed—though his sentence had been all worked out, and he had by dint of honest labour raised himself to eminence and wealth.

Criminals, even those convicted for the first time, may be divided into two classes—the one consisting of those who have deliberately and in cold blood, if I may use the expression, set to work to rob or defraud; and those who have been led astray by others, or have given way to a strong temptation in a moment of difficulty. The one starts with the full intention of committing a dishonest act whatever it may be, whether a burglary, robbery from the person, or a deliberately concocted swindle. The other, in a moment of pressure and temptation, in the hope of saving himself from further difficulty, or to stop a gap, does a wrong and criminal act with every intention of putting the matter right when in his power. He either forges a name or makes use of money in his hands that is not his own—in fact embezzles.

I cannot but consider there is a great difference between the two men, and they should be treated differently. I well remember once hearing a City man make an observation relative to some transactions that attracted a good deal of notice at the time, connected with a large and important bankruptcy. 'When a man,' said he, 'is unduly pressed by adverse circumstances, and is driven for the moment into a tight corner, he is very apt to do that which is not strictly constitutional.' It is just so. There is no doubt that very many men of business, who are regarded by the commercial world as of unimpeachable character, have frequently extricated themselves from tight corners by means which, if closely examined, would be found to be not strictly 'constitutional.' The thing has gone right, and no one is the wiser. It is only when the corner is too tight, and the means fail and the thing goes wrong, that the world hears of it. I do not know how the prison statistics would bear me out; but my impression is that men convicted and punished for crimes that may be termed 'commercial lapses'—say embezzlement, forgery, and breach of trust—are seldom, if ever, guilty a second time; while, on the other hand, the thieving and swindling class of prisoners return to their evil practices like the sow to her wallowing, and are convicted time after time.

These two classes should be kept as much as possible distinct, and men undergoing punishment for first offences should on no account be mixed up with hardened and confirmed rogues. I speak from my own experience. Not only have I become acquainted with more of what is bad and evil, together with the schemes and dodges of professional thieves and swindlers, during the four years I 'served the Queen for nothing,' than I should have done in fifty years outside prison walls; but had I been a man of naturally dishonest tendencies, I might have fallen into the temptation, swallowed the bait, and have formed alliances for a future life of villany and crime.

Some of the plans I have had suggested to me have been most ingenious. I have already alluded to two of them in previous pages. The importance of this separation and classification cannot be too strongly urged upon the attention of the Directors of Convict Prisons, and of those who contemplate legislation on the subject. I think myself that long sentences, as at present carried out, are a mistake, and particularly for first offences. Shorter

periods of imprisonment, and that of a much severer nature as regards discipline, food, and treatment altogether, I believe would be found to be more effective, and it would not lead to so much evil in its effects on the families of men convicted.

The number of wives that 'go wrong,' whose husbands are away for long periods, are very great. After an absence of one or two years the husband seems dead, and gets forgotten. Temptations arise, and become less resistable as time goes on. More women whose husbands are convicted for long periods have taken to loose courses than people would imagine. I have already named one party for whom I appealed to the chaplain at Dartmoor. I heard of several others. The wife of the postman, who was in Newgate with me, remained true and virtuous for two years, when patience became exhausted. An absent husband was no husband. Her needlework brought in but a small sum to help the parish allowance for the provision of her children, and when, at the end of the third year of his imprisonment, a benevolent lady called on her with news from her husband, she found her with an infant in her arms, the result of a connection with a man she was then living 'tally' with.

There is plenty of room for the discipline being made much more severe than it is, and if the periods were made in the first instance shorter there are many alterations that might be made, both in the dietary scale and the bedding comforts to render the punishment much sharper than it is at present. I believe a really severe short sentence of one year would, as a deterrent from future evil courses, be much more efficacious than five or seven years as it now is.

For second comers the treatment, so long as it falls short of cruelty, cannot be too severe. Flogging has, I understand, done a great deal in stopping garotting and such-like crimes. Let this also be applied for all professionals who come for a second time into the convict prisons. Flogging would be much more effectual than it is if it were divided out into small doses. Say a man is sentenced to three dozen with the cat. He gets it generally in Newgate before going to the convict establishments. At the moment, no doubt, he is most repentant, but by the time his seven or ten years are worked out, he forgets it to a great extent. Let it be given in three doses of a dozen each. One, as now, given on

starting; one, when half his time is done; and the remaining dozen, a week before his being set at liberty. I am not a betting man, but would be inclined to lay odds on the beneficial effects of this treatment. I have ever found the professionals to be rank curs and cowards. The looking forward to the second and third floggings would work wonders on such men, and the last dose would be so recent as to prevent its impression from wearing out before he re-entered the outer world, and sought to get a living somehow. I will venture to say very few would be in a hurry to resume their old games immediately. This would work one good effect. The dread of further lashings would actually drive the man into seeking honest employment, and if that is once entered into, and the man is not hunted out of it by any too officious policemen, the chances are greatly in favour of his sticking to the work, and giving no further trouble to the prison authorities. Let it be tried and see how it works. It needs no fresh legislation. Only let the Judge, who sentences the next man to a flogging as part of his punishment, give directions for the same to be applied in three doses. These alterations would, I am confident, act as strong deterrents against crime of all sorts.

Secondly.—The getting rid of the troublesome and criminal population of the country. This reopens the much discussed question of resuming transportation; and if only a suitable place—New Guinea, for instance—can be secured, to which convicts, on second convictions for long sentences, can be sent to, there can be no doubt but it would be better than crowding together in English prisons a number of men. When the good results of former convict colonisation in Australia are reviewed, would it not be well worthy some greater effort than has been made to establish another? When men have served their time out in a colony they have a much fairer start in life again there than in the Mother Country, and the old system of tickets-of-leave, letting men out to work for masters, was found in the main, I believe, to work satisfactorily. Anything must be better than the keeping up such gigantic convict establishments as are at present dotted over this country. The association rooms at Dartmoor are as bad as it is possible for anything to be. I know not if there are any such in other convict prisons, but they are really merely large class-rooms in the college of vice, where all are alike students and professors, every man learning

something from his companion, and imparting his own knowledge in villany in return, till the whole become perfect in their knowledge of what is wrong, of the best and easiest way of pursuing dishonest courses, and the cleverest and most efficient modes of evading detection, and carrying on the war against their natural enemies the 'coppers,' or police. Short, severe sentences, during which all verbal communication between prisoners is rendered impossible, I feel sure would bear much more satisfactory fruit than the present system, which simply, in most instances, merely completes the man's vicious and criminal education, instead of in the slightest degree reforming him.

Possibly directors of prisons or visiting magistrates, if any such should ever read these pages, will say: We frequently inspect the convict establishments and we never see any of these evils. No doubt they do, but let the gentlemen of Parliament Street next time deviate a little from their regular routine.

When the director is coming down to Dartmoor it is known a few days beforehand, and the place is prepared for his visit. Much he should not see is put out of sight. In my position, both in the tailors' shop and the engineers' office, I saw a good deal of this preparation for the director's visit. Let one or two of them run down by night train to Dartmoor without any notice—not even letting the clerks in their own office know of their going. Drive off first thing to the prison, if possible, without even giving the chance of a notice by telegraph from Plymouth to the officials of their coming, and suddenly walk in and through the wards and workshops without any notice to governor or anyone else, and if they do not see a different appearance in many places I should be suprised. Much of the smartness that attracted their attention on the last visit, both of warders and prisoners, would be found to be wanting, and they would not fail to see a laxity in many things they are at present quite ignorant of. Let them visit the baths when a gang is bathing, the association rooms at meal times, and the carpenters', tailors', and other artisan workshops. Much would then be seen they are now ignorant of.

The mere reports of warders and prison officials are very little to be relied on. Reports, like accounts, can be cooked and manipulated to order. Speaking from my own experience in preparing the official accounts for the Blue Books, I can simply say they are in

many cases a mere farce. A certain result is required, and figures are so arranged as to produce that result. My orders were given to me, and I obeyed them. There the accounts are, and very lucid they look. I wonder if anyone ever takes the trouble to read them. I also wonder are all Blue Book accounts alike ?

Thirdly.—The doing this in the most efficient and least costly way to the taxpaying portion of the British public.

The question of expense, of course, would be materially lessened if the system of short severe sentences were adopted. No official pretends for one moment to say that convict labour can ever be made to pay for the expenses of maintaining the establishments. Indeed, even among the able-bodied men, I doubt whether many, if any, do work that is absolutely worth the cost of their keep and clothing, without taking into consideration the expense of warders, guards, &c., to look after them.

I have already, in former pages, shown the cost to the parish from which a farm labourer was convicted by some of the Great Unpaid for stealing a dozen duck eggs. One of the postmen, sentenced to five years for taking a few shillings' worth of stamps from a letter, told me his wife and children had an allowance from St. Pancras parish that would, in the time he had to serve, amount to close on 100*l*. This certainly is not an effective way of doing things at the least cost to the taxpayer.

Were the prisoners kept in separate cells for the whole of their time, as at Millbank and Pentonville, they would not require so many warders to look after them, and consequently not cost so much; but they would have no opportunities of receiving and imparting lessons in villany, and might leave the prison at the end of their terms better men and less educated in crime. If one-half the men who are in prison for first offences were liberated at the expiration of the time they have completed their 'separates' at Millbank or Pentonville, I feel confident they would be less likely to return to evil courses and trouble the magisterial and police authorities again, than they are after graduating at Dartmoor, Chatham, Portsmouth, Portland, and other of the devil's colleges, where old prison birds delight in polluting the minds of those who are thrown into their way.

I should like to see a Royal Commission appointed to thoroughly investigate the whole convict system with a view to its reform-

ation. If such is ever appointed, let them go beyond mere official sources for their information. Let men who, like myself, have seen the ins and outs and the shortcomings be encouraged and invited to give evidence 'in camera,' with proper guarantees and protection against their names being brought publicly forward to their detriment. Let them take the evidence of prisoners now serving their sentences, selecting them from all classes, such evidence is to be given without the presence of any of the prison authorities, and I am confident a mass of useful information would be obtained. They would find out the sore points to be afterwards further investigated, and would be able to get views of the subject taken from quite a different standpoint to the stereotyped ideas of visiting magistrates, prison officials, chaplains, and police.

Of course a great deal of such evidence would have to be taken very much *cum grano*, but of the mass there would be no difficulty in sifting the chaff from the grain, and a great deal of valuable information would be obtained.

If these pages are read by legislators and thinking men who will seriously give attention to a most painful subject, I am sure much good will result. No one doubts for one moment that our prison convict discipline requires to be reorganised, and that in its present state it is far, very far, from what it should be; and if these pages should be the means of inducing the more careful study of the question by those who have the means of bringing about its reform, I shall feel my labours have not been entirely thrown away.

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